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JOHN BUNYAN.

THE LIFE
OF
JOHN BUNYAN,

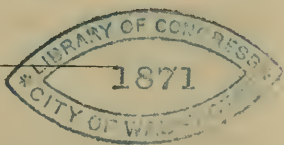
AUTHOR OF
THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

BY STEPHEN B. WICKENS.

Behold, this DREAMER cometh.—GENESIS xxxvii, 19.

Revere the man whose *Pilgrim* marks the road,
And points the *Progress* of the soul to God.—COWPER.

He was a burning and a shining light.—JOHN v, 35.



NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY G. LANE & P. P. SANDFORD,
FOR THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, AT THE CONFERENCE
OFFICE, 200 MULBERRY-STREET.

J. Collord, Printer.

1844.

Deposited in the Clerk's Office for
the Southern District of New York
August 28. 1844.

PR 3331
.W 55

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1844, by
G. LANE & P. P. SANDFORD, in the Clerk's Office of the District
Court of the Southern District of New-York.

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P R E F A C E.

THE name of John Bunyan is one which reflects lustre, not only on the religious denomination of which he was a member, and at whose altars he ministered, but also on the age of the church in which he lived, adorned though that age was with such luminaries as Baxter, Owen, Howe, Hall, and Taylor. His remarkable conversion and subsequent history furnish a striking display of the transforming power of divine grace. In burning zeal and deep piety, in ardour of expression and fertility of imagination, he was equalled by few. As an author he has attained a popularity almost unparalleled, and which increases rather than diminishes with the lapse of years. "His works praise him in the gates," and in the day of eternity thousands will "rise up and call him blessed."

One of his most remarkable productions is his autobiographical narrative, entitled,

“Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners ; or a brief relation of the exceeding mercy of God to his poor servant, John Bunyan ; namely, in his taking him out of the dung-hill, and converting him to the faith of his blessed Son Jesus Christ ; where is also showed, what sight of and what trouble he had for sin, and also what various temptations he hath met with, and how God hath carried him through them all.” It gives a full relation of his religious experience from early childhood till he began to preach ; and has supplied the ground-work of all subsequent lives of its author. The editions published since his decease contain a brief Continuation, written by one who styles himself “a true friend and long acquaintance of Mr. Bunyan,” and which is commonly attributed to Charles Doe, a contemporary Baptist preacher.

In the British Museum there is a copy of an old Memoir, (see p. 270,) by a personal friend of Bunyan’s, who is supposed to have been a clergyman of the English Establishment. Some interesting extracts from this work are given by Mr. Philip, whose re-

searches have added much to our stock of information respecting the author of the Pilgrim's Progress. Dr. Southey, in the Memoir prefixed to his edition of the Pilgrim, has furnished some valuable illustrations of Bunyan's literary history, and "done ampler justice to his genius than most of his predecessors;" but his political and ecclesiastical prejudices rendered him incapable of appreciating his religious opinions and character. The other Memoirs of Bunyan are but brief sketches, except that by Mr. Ivimey, which was a republication of "Grace Abounding," with some Reflections, and an enlarged Continuation. It has now been out of print for many years.

The volume now presented to the reader comprises the substance not only of Bunyan's own narrative, already referred to, but also of all that is known with certainty respecting his life, labours, character, and writings. The additional information has been drawn from Bunyan's other works, from preceding biographies, and from numerous other authentic sources. The whole has been rewritten, and

so condensed and arranged as to give, within the compass of a small volume, a more complete and connected account than is elsewhere to be found.

S. B. W.

New York, February, 1844.

O thou whom, borne on fancy's eager wing
Back to the season of life's happy spring,
I pleased remember, and while memory yet
Holds fast her office here, can ne'er forget,—
Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;
Whose hum'rous vein, strong sense, and simple style,
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile;
Witty, and well employed, and, like thy Lord,
Speaking in parables his slighted word;
I name thee not, lest so despised a name
Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame;
Yet, e'en in transitory life's late day,
That mingles all my brown with sober gray,
Revere the man, whose *Pilgrim* marks the road,
And guides the *Progress* of the soul to God.
'Twere well with most if books that could engage
Their childhood pleased them at a riper age:
The man, approving what had charm'd the boy,
Would die at last in comfort, peace, and joy;
And not with curses on his art who stole
The gem of truth from his unguarded soul.

COWPER.

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Elstow Church and Belfry.



VIEW OF BUNYAN'S COTTAGE AT ELSTOW.

THE
LIFE OF JOHN BUNYAN.

CHAPTER I.

BUNYAN'S BIRTH AND PARENTAGE: DEPRAVITY
OF HIS YOUTHFUL YEARS.

BEDFORD is a flourishing town, lying in a rich valley, on the banks of the Ouse, about fifty miles from London. It is a place of great antiquity, and has been the theatre of important events. More than a thousand years have passed away since the first building was erected on its site. It has been the scene of Saxon and Danish warfare; and its strong castle (demolished centuries ago) witnessed many a bloody siege. Yet to multitudes, with whom its name is a familiar sound, Bedford is known only from its connection with an individual who, though of obscure parentage and humble occupation, there earned for himself "a name that will outlive the memory of kings"—the world-renowned author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*.

But although we are accustomed to associate the town of Bedford with the name of Bunyan, he was not a native of that place, but of Elstow, a small village about a mile distant, where he was born in the year 1628, in the humble dwelling which is represented in our engraving.

Of Bunyan's early history, except his spiritual experience, of which he has left a faithful and ample record, little can now be ascertained. Had he dreamed, observes Dr. Southey, of being for ever known, and taking his place among those who may be called the immortals of the earth, he would probably have given us more details of his temporal circumstances and the events of his life; but glorious dreamer though he was, this never entered into his imaginings.

Of his parentage he says, "My descent was of a low and inconsiderable generation, my father's house being of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all the families in the land." His father was a tinker, and brought up his sons, of whom he had several, to the same business; but he was not, as some have supposed, one of those itinerant repairers of dilapidated pots and kettles, called gipsies. He had a settled habitation, and though poor was honest, and bore a fair character.

Bunyan records, with gratitude, that his parents, "notwithstanding their meanness and in-

considerableness," sent him to school, "to learn both to read and write, the which," he adds, "I also attained according to the rate of other poor men's children, though, to my shame I confess, I did soon lose that little I learnt, even almost utterly."

At what school he was placed we are not told. Mr. Philip suggests that it may have been the grammar school founded at Bedford in 1556, by Sir W. Harpur, (mayor of London,) for teaching "grammar and good manners," and which was then open to the children of the poor.

"But if Bunyan was educated at the Harpur school, he certainly did not learn '*good manners*,' whatever '*grammar*' he acquired there." Associating with vile companions, he was early initiated into profaneness, and soon became a sort of ringleader in all kinds of boyish vice and ungodliness; so that, as he tells us, "from a child he had but few equals, considering his years, for cursing, swearing, lying, and blaspheming the holy name of God; yea," he adds, "so settled and rooted was I in these things, that they became as a second nature to me."

Whether his parents took any pains to check his vicious propensities, we cannot tell; but that by some persons, if not by them, he was faithfully warned of the consequences of his bad conduct, is evident from his early compunctions

of conscience, and the terrific visions which haunted his nightly slumbers. "Even in my childhood," he says, "the Lord did scare and affrighten me with fearful dreams, and did terrify me with fearful visions. For often, after I have spent this and the other day in sin, I have in my bed been greatly afflicted, while asleep, with the apprehensions of devils and wicked spirits, who still, as I then thought, laboured to draw me away with them, of which I could never be rid. Also I should at these years be greatly afflicted and troubled with the thoughts of the fearful torments of hell-fire, still fearing that it would be my lot to be found at last among those devils and hellish fiends who are there bound down with the chains and bonds of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.

"These things, I say, when I was but a child, but nine or ten years old, did so distress my soul, that then, in the midst of my many sports and childish vanities, amidst my vain companions, I was often much cast down, and afflicted in my mind therewith, yet I could not let go my sins: yea, I was also then so overcome with despair of life and heaven, that I should often wish, either that there had been no hell, or that I had been a devil; supposing that they were only tormentors; that if it must needs

be that I went thither, I might rather be a tormentor than be tormented myself."

Some of the terrible dreams by which Bunyan's conscience was aroused and alarmed are related in the old Memoir. "Once he dreamed he saw the face of the heavens, as it were, all on fire, the firmament crackling and shivering as with the noise of mighty thunders, and an archangel flew in the midst of heaven sounding a trumpet, and a glorious throne was seated in the east, whereon sat one in brightness like the morning star; upon which he, thinking it was the end of the world, fell upon his knees, and, with uplifted hands toward heaven, cried, 'O Lord God, have mercy upon me! what shall I do! the day of judgment is come, and I am not prepared!' when immediately he heard a voice behind him, exceeding loud, saying, 'Repent;' and upon this he awoke, and found it but a dream. Yet, as he said, upon this he grew more serious, and it remained in his mind a considerable time.

"At another time he dreamed that he was in a pleasant place, jovial and rioting, banqueting and feasting his senses, when immediately a mighty earthquake rent the earth, and made a wide gap, out of which came bloody flames, and the figures of men tossed up in globes of fire, and falling down again with horrible cries,

shrieks, and execrations, while some devils that were with them laughed aloud at their torment ; and while he stood trembling at this sight, he thought the earth sunk under him, and a circle of flame enclosed him ; but when he fancied he was just at the point to perish, one in white shining raiment descended and plucked him out of that dreadful place, while devils cried after him to leave him with them, to take the just punishment his sins had deserved ; yet he escaped the danger, and leaped for joy when he awoke and found it but a dream. Many others, somewhat to the same purpose, I might mention, as he at sundry times related them ; but, not to be tedious, these for a taste may suffice.”*

Such visions could not fail to make a strong impression on a mind so excitable as Bunyan’s, and it is not unlikely that they suggested to him, in after years, the idea of representing the story of his pilgrim “under the similitude of a dream.”

The immediate moral effect produced by these dreams was, however, both small and transient ; and when, after awhile, they left him, and his apprehensions of future punishment wore off, he

* It is highly probable that the dream which Bunyan put into the mouth of the man in the chamber at the “Interpreter’s house,” is, with perhaps some variations, a relation of one of his own youthful visions.

let loose to the reins of his vicious habits, and followed after sin with more greediness than ever. He says of himself, "In these days the thoughts of religion were very grievous to me; I could neither endure it myself, nor that any other should; so that when I have seen some read in those books that concerned Christian piety, it would be as it were a prison to me. Then I said unto God, 'Depart from me, for I desire not the knowledge of thy ways.' I was now void of all good consideration; heaven and hell were both out of sight and mind; and as for saving and damning, they were least in my thoughts. Yea, such prevalency had the lusts of the flesh on this poor soul of mine, that had not a miracle of grace prevented, I had not only perished by the stroke of eternal justice, but had also laid myself open, even to the stroke of those laws which bring some to disgrace and open shame before the world.

"But this I well remember, that though I could myself sin with the greatest delight and ease, and also take pleasure in the vileness of my companions, yet, even then, if I had at any time seen wicked things by those who professed godliness, it would make my spirit tremble. As once above all the rest, when I was in the height of my vanity, yet hearing one swear, that

was reckoned a religious man, it had so great a stroke upon my spirit that it made my heart ache.

“ But God did not utterly leave me, but followed me still, not with convictions, but with judgments ; yet such as were mixed with mercy. For once I fell into a creek of the sea, and hardly escaped drowning. Another time I fell out of a boat into Bedford River, but mercy yet preserved me alive. Besides, another time, being in the field with one of my companions, it chanced that an adder passed over the highway ; so I, having a stick in my hand, struck her over the back ; and, having stunned her, I forced open her mouth with my stick, and plucked her sting out with my fingers ; by which act, had not God been merciful unto me, I might, by my desperateness, have brought myself to my end.

“ Here, as I said, were judgments and mercy, but neither of them did awaken my soul to righteousness ; wherefore I sinned still, and grew more and more rebellious against God, and careless of my own salvation.”

Some of Bunyan's biographers are exceedingly anxious to convey the impression that he was not, in the days of his folly, so bad as he represents himself to have been. This is especially the case with Dr. Southey, who says, “ The wickedness of the tinker has been greatly

overcharged; and it is taking the language of self-accusation too literally, to pronounce of John Bunyan that he was at any time depraved.—His self-accusations are to be received with some distrust, not of his sincerity, but of his sober judgment. The worst of what he was in his worst days is to be expressed in a single word, for which we have no synonyme, and the full meaning of which no circumlocution can convey,—in a word, he had been a *blackguard*:—

‘The very head and front of his offending
Hath this extent, no more.’

Such he might have been expected to be by his birth, breeding, and vocation; scarcely indeed by possibility could he have been otherwise; but he was never a vicious man.—The practice of profane swearing was the worst, if not the *only* sin to which he was ever addicted.”

We are surprised that this passage should have been written in the face of Bunyan’s express declaration that he “had but few equals,” not only for “cursing and swearing,” but also for *lying*; and the well-known fact that he was an open and notorious *sabbath breaker*; for unsound as are the laureate’s opinions on some of the cardinal *doctrines* of Christianity, it cannot be that his code of *morals* is so loose as not to include lying and sabbath breaking in its catalogue of vices.

We can discover in what Bunyan relates of himself, before his conversion, no appearance of a desire to exaggerate his wickedness; his language is evidently that of a man who was conscious he was writing the words of truth and soberness. It is true, he was never a drunkard, nor was he, in the *gross* sense of the word, licentious; neither does he charge himself with these sins: on the contrary, he zealously and characteristically defends himself from the imputation of the latter. That he did, however, in the vices to which he was addicted, acquire a bad pre-eminence among his fellow-sinners, is not only certain from his own declarations, but was also to have been expected from his bold and ardent temperament, and the natural energy of his character, which were such that he was not likely to content himself with mediocrity in anything, good or bad, that he engaged in. We give full credence, therefore, to Bunyan's account of his youthful depravity; and instead of endeavouring to palliate his misconduct, we would rather adore the riches of His grace, who, from such a depth of mental and moral degradation, raised him up to become one of the brightest luminaries of the Christian church.

CHAPTER II.

BUNYAN IN THE ARMY : HIS MARRIAGE, AND
OUTWARD REFORMATION.

IT was Bunyan's lot to fall upon troublous times. The civil war between Charles I. and the parliament broke out about the period of his life at which we have now arrived,—just as he was growing up to manhood. A youth of his bold and reckless character could not be expected to remain an idle spectator of this exciting struggle ; and accordingly we find that he enlisted as a soldier, and joined the parliamentary forces, when he was only seventeen years of age.

While he was in the army he experienced a merciful interposition of Providence, which he relates in the following words :—“ This also I have taken notice of with thanksgiving : when I was a soldier, I, with others, were drawn out to go to such a place to besiege it ; but when I was just ready to go, one of the company desired to go in my room ; to which, when I had consented, he took my place ; and coming to the siege, as he stood sentinel, he was shot in the head with a musket bullet, and died.”

Bunyan does not specify where this took place, but the information is supplied by the author of the old Memoir already referred to, who says, "He often acknowledged, with uplifted hands and eyes, a wonderful providence: for in June, 1645, being at the siege of Leicester, he was called out to be one [of a party] who should make a violent attack on the town, [which was then] vigorously defended by the king's forces against the parliamentarians. He appearing to the officer to be somewhat awkward in handling his arms, another man voluntarily thrust himself into his place."

At this time Bunyan was only seventeen, and his youth, as well as the fact of his being but a raw recruit, sufficiently accounts for the *awkwardness* which appears to have been the indirect means of saving his life.

His period of military service was short; probably less than two years. Soon after quitting the army, and while he was yet very young, it is supposed before he was nineteen, he entered into the marriage state; and his "mercy was," he tells us, "to light upon a wife whose father was counted godly." This step, as we learn from his earliest biographer, was advised by his friends, who "thought that changing his condition to the married state

might reform him, and therefore urged him to it as a seasonable and comfortable advantage. But the difficult thing was, that his poverty, and irregular course of life, made it very difficult for him to get a wife suitable to his inclination: and because none of the rich would yield to his solicitations, he found himself constrained to marry one without *any* fortune." As it respects "fortune," she seems to have been about on a par with her husband, who says, "We came together as poor as poor might be, not having so much household stuff as a dish or a spoon between us." But it will be asked, How came a virtuous woman, who had been religiously educated, to marry such a man as Bunyan; and what prospect could she have had of either happiness or comfort with him? In reply to this question it should be remarked, that Bunyan, in his worst state, does not appear to have been either an idle, a malicious, or an intemperate man; nor was he as conscience-hardened as many less notorious sinners. Besides, as it was a hope of his reformation that encouraged his friends to bring about the match, so it is not unlikely that *she* was, in some degree, influenced by the same motive in uniting her lot with his. Certain it is, that his career of vice received a considerable check in consequence

of his marriage, which may very justly be regarded as the first step toward his conversion. It should be remarked, too, that at this time Mrs. Bunyan, though strictly moral, does not appear to have known much of experimental piety.

The sole portion, besides herself, which Bunyan's wife brought to her husband was two books, "The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven," and "The Practice of Piety,"* which she inherited from her father,—and which "she frequently enticed her husband to read, and apply the use of them to the reforming his manners, and saving his soul."—(*Old Memoir.*) Bunyan himself says, "In these two books I should†

* These two works appear to have been the most popular religious books of the day. Richard Baxter, who was contemporary with Bunyan, mentions as one of the characteristics of those pious persons who in that day were stigmatized as Puritans, that "they read the Scriptures, and such books as 'The Practice of Piety,' Dent's 'Plain Man's Pathway,' and 'Dod on the Commandments,' &c." Of "The Practice of Piety," which was written by Bayley, bishop of Bangor, fifty editions, as we are informed by Southey, were published in the course of a hundred years; and it was also translated into Welsh, (the author's native language,) into Hungarian, and into Polish.

† Bunyan uses the word "should" in the sense of *would*,—a practice which was once common in some

sometimes read with* her, wherein I also found some things that were somewhat pleasing to me ; but all this while I met with no conviction. She also would be often telling me of what a godly man her father was ; and how he would reprove and correct vice, both in his house and among his neighbours ; and what a strict and holy life he led in his days, both in word and deed."

The reading of these books, the admonitions of his wife, and her frequent references to the piety of her father, had a winning influence upon Bunyan, who says, " Though they did not reach my heart, to awaken it about my sad and sinful state, yet they did beget within me some desires to reform my vicious life, and fall in very eagerly with the religion of the times ; to wit, to go to church twice a day, and that too with

parts of England. The reader will bear this in mind in reading our quotations from Bunyan.

* *Without* her he would probably have been *unable* to read them. The old Memoir says, " To the voice of his wife he hearkened, and by that means *recovered* his reading, which, not minding before, he had almost lost." This agrees with Bunyan's own statement, when speaking of his being sent by his parents to school,—“ I did soon lose that little I learnt, even almost utterly, and that long before the Lord did work his gracious work of conversion upon my soul.”

the foremost ; and there very devoutly say and sing, as others did, yet retaining my wicked life ; but withal I was so overrun with the spirit of superstition, that I adored, and that with great devotion, even all things—both the high place, [pulpit,] priest, clerk, vestment, service, and what else—belonging to the church ; counting all things holy that were therein contained, and especially the priest and clerk most happy, and without doubt greatly blessed, because they were the servants, as I then thought, of God, and were principal in his holy temple to do his work therein.

“ This conceit grew so strong in a little time upon my spirit, that had I but seen a priest, (though never so sordid and debauched in his life,) I should find my spirit fall under him, reverence him, and knit unto him ; yea, I thought, for the love I did bear unto them, (supposing they were the ministers of God,) I could have laid down at their feet, and have been trampled on by them ; their name, their garb, and work did so intoxicate and bewitch me.*

* This is precisely the feeling of abject reverence with which the priest of the Romish Church is regarded by the common people in Popish countries ; and if at this period of his life, when his imagination was so much

“ But all this while I was not sensible of the danger and evil of sin ; I was kept from considering that sin would damn me, what religion soever I followed, unless I was found in Christ ; nay, I never thought of him, nor whether there was such an one or no. Thus man while blind doth wander, but wearieth himself with vanity, for he knoweth not the way to the city of God.”

Bunyan's utter ignorance, at this period, of the nature of true religion would seem to indicate, either that his minister was not very evangelical in his discourses, or else that he himself was not a very attentive hearer. The latter is the more probable supposition, for the Presbyterians were then the dominant sect, and filled nearly all the parish churches ; and they were not accustomed to inculcate a superstitious reverence for outward things and mere ceremonies, or likely to leave an *attentive* hearer in entire ignorance of the way of salvation. Doubtless there were among them, as is generally the

stronger than his judgment, and his mind had not emerged from the grossest ignorance, Bunyan had been thrown in the way of an artful emissary of that church, it is probable that he would have been inextricably entangled in the toils of superstition. His moral and intellectual progress would have terminated at the Giant's Cave.—

Conder's Life, p. xx.

case in churches established by law, some hypocritical pretenders, who, having entered "the priest's office for a morsel of bread," were ready to accommodate their doctrines to the tastes and wishes of their hearers; but the minister of Elstow could scarcely have been one of this class, for we find him zealously inveighing against sabbath breaking—perhaps the most popular and crying sin of the day.

Now Bunyan was passionately fond of the various sports and games with which the English peasantry were then in the habit of desecrating the holy sabbath; and when his minister set forth the sinfulness of breaking that sacred day, either by labour, sports, or otherwise, his conscience was smitten; for the first time in his life he "felt what guilt was," and he "went home," he tells us, "when the sermon was ended, with a great burden on his spirit."

But this feeling did not last long. "Before I had dined," he says, "the trouble began to go off my mind, and my heart returned to its old course.—Wherefore, when I had satisfied nature with my food, I shook the sermon out of my mind, and to my old custom of sports and gaming I returned with great delight.

"But the same day, as I was in the midst of a game of cat, and having struck it one blow

from the hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, ‘Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?’ At this I was put to an exceeding amaze; wherefore, leaving my cat upon the ground, I looked up to heaven, and was as if I had, with the eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if he did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for these and other ungodly practices.”

At this moment a suggestion of the evil one suddenly fastened upon his mind, and he was tempted to conclude that it was too late for him to seek after heaven; that he had been so great and grievous a sinner that Christ would not forgive his transgressions. “Then,” he says, “I fell to musing on this also; and while I was thinking of it, and fearing lest it should be so, I felt my heart sink in despair, concluding it was too late; and therefore I resolved in my mind to go on in sin: for, thought I, if the case be thus, my state is surely miserable—miserable if I leave my sins, and but miserable if I follow them; I can but be damned, and if I must be so, I had as good be damned for many sins as for few.

“ Thus I stood in the midst of my play, before all that then were present ; but yet I told them nothing ; but, I say, having made this conclusion, I returned desperately to my sport again, and I well remember, that presently this kind of despair did so possess my soul, that I was persuaded I could never attain to other comfort than what I should get in sin ; for heaven was gone already, so that on that I must not think. Wherefore I found within me great desire to have my fill of sin ; and I made as much haste as I could to fill myself with its delicacies, lest I should die before I had my desires ; for that I feared greatly. In these things, I protest before God I lie not, neither do I frame this sort of speech ; these were really, strongly, and with all my heart, my desires. The good Lord, whose mercy is unsearchable, forgive my transgressions !”

In this state of mind he continued for about a month, when the incident occurred which is commonly supposed to have been the main cause of his conversion, though, as Mr. St. John remarks, it was in reality only one link in the chain of circumstances leading to that event. “ One day,” says Bunyan, “ as I was standing at a neighbour’s shop window, and there cursing and swearing, and playing the madman,

after my wonted manner, there sat within the woman of the house, and heard me ; who, though she was a very loose and ungodly wretch, yet protested that I swore and cursed at the most ungodly rate ; that she was made to tremble to hear me ; and told me further, that I was the ungodliest fellow for swearing that she ever heard in all her life ; and that I by thus doing was able to spoil all the youth in the whole town, if they came but in my company." She also admonished the young men who were with him to shun his conversation, or he would make them as bad as himself.*

This severe rebuke, coming from such an unexpected quarter, was not lost upon Bunyan, who says, " At this reproof I was silenced, and put to secret shame ; and that too, as I thought, before the God of heaven ; wherefore, while I stood there, and hanging down my head, I

* Somewhat similar to this was the remarkable circumstance in the life of Mr. Perkins, an able minister of the gospel, who, while a student at Cambridge, was a great drunkard. As he was walking in the skirts of the town, he heard a woman say to a child that was froward and peevish, " Hold your tongue, or I will give you to drunken Perkins yonder." Finding himself become a by-word among the people, his conscience was deeply impressed, and this was the first step toward his conversion.—*Ivimey*.

wished with all my heart that I might be a little child again, that my father might teach me to speak without this wicked way of swearing; for, thought I, I am so accustomed to it, that it is in vain for me to think of a reformation, for I thought that could never be.

“ But how it came to pass I know not ; I did from this time forward so leave my swearing, that it was a great wonder to myself to observe it ; and whereas, before, I knew not how to speak unless I put an oath before, and another behind, to make my words have authority ; now I could, without it, speak better and with more pleasantness than ever I could before. All this while I knew not Jesus Christ, neither did I leave my sports and plays.”

The next step in his reformation was his taking delight in reading the word of God, to which he was led by the conversation of a poor man who made a profession of religion ; and “ who,” says Bunyan, “ as I then thought, did talk pleasantly of the Scriptures, and of the matter of religion ; wherefore, falling into some love and liking to what he said, I betook me to my Bible, and began to take great pleasure in reading.” His favourite portions of Scripture at this time were the historical books : for St. Paul’s Epistles he had no relish whatever : he

“could not away with them,” he says, for he was as yet ignorant of the corruption of his nature, and his need of a Saviour.

His reading, however, was not unproductive of good, for it occasioned some further reformation both of his language and conduct. He now set the commandments before him as the rule of his life and the way to heaven. These commandments he strove to keep, and, as he thought, “did keep them pretty well sometimes,” and then he felt encouraged and comforted. “Yet now and then,” he says, “I should break one, and so afflict my conscience. But then I should repent, and say I was sorry for it, and promise God to do better; and there got help again; for then I thought I pleased God as well as any man in England.”

In this way he continued about a year, during which time he was considered to be a very godly and religious man by his neighbours, who, says Bunyan “were amazed at this my great conversion from prodigious profaneness to something like a moral life; for this my conversion was as great as for Tom of Bedlam to become a sober man. Now therefore they began to praise, to commend, and to speak well of me, both to my face and behind my back. Now I was, as they said, become godly; now

I was become a right honest man. But O! when I understood those were their words and opinions of me, it pleased me mighty well. For though as yet I was nothing but a poor painted hypocrite, yet I loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly. I was proud of my godliness, and indeed I did all I did either to be seen of, or to be spoken well of by men."

We can readily conceive Bunyan's gratification at hearing the commendations of his neighbours on his change of conduct. It was quite natural that he should be, as he expresses it, "mighty well" pleased; for to be thought and spoken well of was a *new* as well as pleasant thing to one who had hitherto been almost a by-word for profanity and wickedness.

Mr. Philip, at this point, very happily reminds his readers of one who must have been no small partaker of this joy: he carries them, in imagination, to the tinker's fireside, and pictures the rapture which his *wife* must have felt in witnessing the progress of that reformation which she, in the providence of God, appears to have been the chief instrument in producing.

CHAPTER III.

BUNYAN'S RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE : DIFFICULTIES ABOUT FAITH, ELECTION, ETC.

BUNYAN had formerly taken great delight in ringing ; but now that his "conscience began to be tender," he thought it a vain practice, and forced himself to leave it : "yet," he says, "my mind hankered ; wherefore I would now go to the steeple-house* and look on, though I durst not ring ; but I thought this did not become religion neither ; yet I forced myself, and would look on still ; but quickly after I began to think, How if one of the bells should fall ? Then I chose to stand under a main beam, that lay athwart the steeple, from side to side, thinking here I might stand sure ; but then I thought again, should the bell fall with a swing, it might first hit the wall, and then, rebounding upon me, might kill me, for all this beam. This made me stand in the steeple door ; and now, thought I, I am safe enough ; for if the bell should then fall, I can slip out between these thick walls,

* The "steeple-house," or belfry of Elstow church, contrary to the general practice, stood apart from the main building. See the note on page 331.

and so be preserved notwithstanding. So after this I would yet go to see them ring, but would not go further than the steeple door ; but then it came into my head, How if the steeple itself should fall ? And this thought did continually so shake my mind, that I durst not stand at the steeple door any longer, but was forced to flee, for fear the steeple should fall upon my head.”*

* Most of the parish churches in England have what is called a “ peal of bells” in the steeple, which are rung at stated times, and on occasions of public rejoicing. With their gladsome music the sabbath is commonly ushered in—a custom which is alluded to in the well-known poem by the pious and excellent vicar of Harrow, commencing,—

“ I love the sabbath morn to come,
When village bells awake the day ;
And by their sacred minstrelsy
Call me from earthly cares away.”

But what harm, it may be asked, is there in all this, that Bunyan should feel any scruples of conscience in regard to it ? If the ringers were a company of truly pious individuals, whose hearts ascended in grateful praises to their Maker, in harmony with the joyous sounds with which they hailed the sacred day of rest, there might be no more objection to the bells in the steeple than to the organ in the church. But this, we presume, is rarely the case. The ringers are seldom the most *sober* or *godly* persons in the parish. Bunyan instinctively felt that neither the company nor the conversation in the belfry

Another of the amusements which Bunyan found it hard to relinquish was his dancing. "I was full a year," he says, "before I could quite leave that; but all this while, when I thought I kept this or that commandment, or did anything that I thought was good, I had great peace in my conscience; and should think with myself, God cannot but be now pleased with me; yea, to relate it in mine own way, I thought no man in England could please God better than I. But, poor wretch as I was, I was all this while ignorant of Jesus Christ, and going about to establish my own righteousness, and had perished therein, had not God in mercy showed me more of my state by nature."

From this self-righteous delusion he was awakened by hearing a few pious females conversing on the subject of religion. We give the narration in his own words:—"Upon a day the good providence of God called me to Bedford to work at my calling; and in one of the streets of that town I came where there were three or four poor women sitting at a door, in

at Elstow would be likely to edify a soul labouring under conviction of sin. He knew too well the character of the men. What they were we may judge from the fact that he, in his worst days, was one of them; and most likely a fair sample of the rest.

the sun, talking about the things of God ; and being now willing to hear their discourse, I drew near to hear what they said, (for I was now a brisk talker of myself in the matter of religion,) but I may say I heard but understood not, for they were far above—out of my reach. Their talk was about a new birth, the work of God in their hearts, as also how they were convinced of their miserable state by nature. They talked how God had visited their souls with his love in the Lord Jesus, and with what words and promises they had been refreshed, comforted, and supported against the temptations of the devil. Moreover, they reasoned of the suggestions and temptations of Satan in particular ; and told to each other by what means they had been afflicted, and how they were borne up under his assaults. They also discoursed of their own wretchedness of heart, and of their unbelief ; and did condemn, slight, and abhor their own righteousness as filthy, and insufficient to do them any good.

“ And methought they spake as if joy did make them speak ; they spake with such pleasantness of Scripture language, and with such appearance of grace in all they said, that they were to me as if they had found a new world ; as if they were people that dwelt alone, and

were not to be reckoned among their neighbours.

“At this I felt my own heart began to shake, and mistrust my condition to be naught; for I saw that in all my thoughts about religion and salvation the new birth did never enter into my mind; neither knew I the comfort of the word and promise, nor the deceitfulness and treachery of my own wicked heart. As for secret thoughts, I took no notice of them; neither did I understand what Satan’s temptations were, nor how they were to be withstood and resisted.”

When he left this little company, to go about his employment, their talk and discourse went with him, while his heart tarried behind; “for,” he says, “I was greatly affected with their words, both because by them I was convinced that I wanted the true tokens of a truly godly man, and also because by them I was convinced of the happy and blessed condition of him that was such an one.”

Bunyan began from this time to seek the company of these pious women. He could not, he tells us, stay away; and the more he went among them the more he questioned his own state, and the more his heart was softened “under the conviction of what by Scripture they asserted.” His mind was now so intent

on spiritual and eternal things, that "neither pleasures, nor profits, nor persuasions, nor threats could make it let go its hold ;—it would then," he says, "have been as difficult for me to have taken my mind from heaven to earth, as I have found it often since to get it again from earth to heaven."

But with all this tenderness of heart and conscience, and absorbing interest in spiritual things, Bunyan was still, as respects Christian doctrine, a mere babe in knowledge ; nor were his present companions, pious and godly though they were, and profitable as their conversation had been to him, qualified to become his spiritual instructors ; he was consequently in great danger of being led out of the way by some one of the numerous sects of fanatics which sprung up in England in this period of civil and religious commotion. One of the worst of these sects was the Ranters—"a set," says Mr. Scott, "of the vilest Antinomians that almost ever existed."* Some of their publications, "which

* "They made it their business," says Baxter, "to set up the light of nature, in men, under the name of Christ, and to dishonour and cry down the church, the Scripture, the present ministry, and our worship and ordinances. They called men to hearken to Christ within them ; but withal, they enjoined a cursed doctrine of

were highly in esteem by several old professors," fell about this time into Bunyan's hands, and their specious sophistries appear to have caused him no little perplexity; he could not, he says, "make a judgment about them." He probably felt himself unable to answer their arguments, and was unwilling to embrace their sentiments. Distrusting his own wisdom, he wisely sought that "which is from above," and betook himself to hearty prayer in this manner: "O Lord, I am a fool, and not able to know the truth from error: Lord, leave me not to my own blindness, either to approve of or condemn this doctrine; if it be of God, let me not despise it; if it be of the devil, let me not embrace it. Lord, I lay my soul in this matter only at thy

libertinism, which brought them all to abominable filthiness of life. They taught that God regardeth not the actions of the outward man, but of the heart; and that to the pure all things are pure, even things forbidden; and so, as allowed by God, they spake most hideous words of blasphemy, &c. I have seen myself, letters written from Abingdon, where, among both soldiers and people, this contagion did then prevail, full of horrid oaths, curses, and blasphemy, not fit to be repeated by the tongue or pen of man; and these all uttered as the effect of knowledge, and a part of their religion, in a fanatic strain, and fathered on the Spirit of God. But the horrid villanies of this sect did speedily extinguish it."

foot, let me not be deceived, I humbly beseech thee." Such a prayer, offered in sincerity and faith, could not be denied. "Blessed be God," continues Bunyan, "who put it into my heart to cry to him to be kept and directed, still distrusting mine own wisdom; for I have since seen even the effects of that prayer, in his preserving me, not only from ranting errors, but from those also that have sprung up since."

Bunyan's danger from this seducing and fatal heresy was rendered the more imminent from the fact, that it had been embraced by his "intimate religious companion,"—the poor man whose "pleasant talk of the Scriptures" had first led him "into some love and liking of religion." But this man, going on from bad to worse, soon, by the looseness of his life, became a warning rather than a snare. He gave himself up to all manner of iniquity; denied that there was a God, angel, or spirit, and laughed at all exhortations to sobriety. "When I laboured to rebuke his wickedness," says Bunyan, "he would laugh the more, and pretend that he had gone through all religions, and could never hit upon the right till now. He told me also, that in a little time I should see all professors turn to the ways of the Ranters. Wherefore, abominating their cursed principles, I left his com-

pany forthwith, and became to him as great a stranger as I had been before a familiar."

But this man was not Bunyan's only temptation. His calling frequently led him into the country, where he was often thrown into the company of persons who were once strict in religion, but had been drawn away by the Ranters. "These," he says, "would also talk with me of their ways, and condemn me as legal and dark; pretending that they only had attained to perfection that could do what they would and not sin. O! these temptations were suitable to my flesh, I being but a young man; but God, who had, as I hoped, designed me for better things, kept me in the fear of his name, and did not suffer me to embrace such cursed principles."

He now took increased delight in the Scriptures. "The Bible," he says, "was precious to me in those days. And methought I began to look into it with new eyes, and read as I never did before, and especially the Epistles of St. Paul were sweet and pleasant to me; and indeed then I was never out of the Bible, either by reading or meditation; still crying out to God that I might know the truth, and way to heaven and glory."

Some passages of Paul's Epistles, which he now read with so much attention, but without

any spiritual guide or instructor, occasioned his being assaulted by many sore temptations. He found the apostle constantly speaking about faith, and he was led to doubt whether he had faith or not ; this, however, was a doubt which he could not bear, being certain that if he were without faith he must perish ; he therefore determined, "at a venture," to conclude that he was not altogether faithless, though he confessed he knew not what faith was. This "blind conclusion," as he calls it, did not long satisfy him,—he could not rest content until he had some *certain knowledge*, and therefore resolved to put himself on the trial, whether he had faith or not. At this point, "being put to a plunge about it," and having as yet opened his mind on the subject to no one, "the tempter," he says, "came in with this delusion, that there was no way for me to know I had faith, but by trying to work some miracles ; urging those scriptures that seem to look that way for the enforcing and strengthening his temptation. Nay, one day, as I was between Elstow and Bedford, the temptation was hot upon me, to try if I had faith, by doing some miracle, which miracle at this time was this : I must say to the puddles that were in the horse-pads, 'Be dry ;' and to the dry places, 'Be you puddles :' and truly one

time I was going to say so indeed ; but just as I was about to speak, this thought came into my mind, But go under yonder hedge and pray first, that God will make you able. But when I had concluded to pray, this came hot upon me, that if I prayed, and came again and tried to do it, and yet did nothing notwithstanding, then to be sure I had no faith, but was a cast-away, and lost. Nay, thought I, if it be so, I will not try yet, but will stay a little longer. So I continued at a great loss ; for I thought, if they only had faith which could do so wonderful things, then I concluded that, for the present, I neither had it, nor yet for the time to come were ever like to have it. Thus I was tossed betwixt the devil and mine own ignorance, and so perplexed, especially at some times, that I could not tell what to do."

Bunyan evidently suspected that he had no faith ; but, to use his own language, he " was afraid to *see* his want " of it. The various suggestions and temptations with which he was now assailed he rightly attributes, in his narrative, to the agency of the evil one ; but he was not *at the time* aware of this. He was then " ignorant of Satan's devices."

While he was in this state of mind the happiness of his poor friends at Bedford was pre-

sented to him in a kind of vision—a waking dream; or, perhaps, during actual slumber. Whether dream or revery, it made a strong impression. He says, “I saw as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought, also, betwixt me and them I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain: now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass; concluding that if I could, I would even go into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun. About this wall I bethought myself to go again and again, still praying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time. At the last I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little doorway, in the wall, through which I attempted to pass. Now, the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many offers to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well nigh quite beat out, by striving to get in. At last, with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head; and after that, by a sideling striving, my shoulders and my whole body: then I was exceeding glad, went and sat

down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun.*

“Now this mountain and wall, &c., was thus made out to me. The *mountain* signified the church of the living God; the *sun* that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of his merciful face on them that were therein; the *wall* I thought was the word, that did make separation between the Christians and the world; and the *gap* which was in the wall, I thought was Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father. But forasmuch as the passage was wonderfully narrow, even so narrow that I could not, but with great difficulty, enter in thereat, it showed me that none could enter into life but those that were in downright earnest, and unless also they left that wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body, soul, and sin.

“This resemblance abode upon my spirit many days; all which time I saw myself in a forlorn and sad condition, but yet was provoked to a vehement hunger and desire to be one of that number that did sit in the sunshine. Now

* In this vision Dr. Southey thinks “the germ of the Pilgrim’s Progress may plainly be perceived.” May we not rather say, the germinating of that imagination which was afterward to ripen into genius?—*Conder*.

also would I pray wherever I was, whether at home or abroad, in house or field; and would also often, with lifting up of heart, sing that of the fifty-first psalm, ‘O Lord, consider my distress!’ for as yet I knew not where I was: neither as yet could I attain to any comfortable persuasion that I had faith in Christ; but, instead of having satisfaction here, I began to find my soul to be assaulted with fresh doubts about my future happiness.”

These “fresh doubts” were founded chiefly on the Calvinistic doctrines of *unconditional election* and *effectual calling*, which he had probably imbibed from his Christian friends at Bedford, who were members of a Baptist church in that place.

He was at this time, to use his own language, “in a flame to find the way to heaven and glory;” but the question, whether or not he was one of the *elect*, so discouraged him, that at times he seemed “as if the very strength of his body had been taken away by the force and power thereof.” While his mind was harassed with this question, he found a stumbling-block in the following text:—“It is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that showeth mercy,” Rom. ix, 16. With this scripture he knew not what to do. It seemed

to him that though he should desire, and long, and labour, until his heart broke, no good could come of it unless he were a chosen vessel of mercy. "Therefore," he says, "this would stick with me, 'How can you tell that you are elected? and what if you should not?' O Lord, thought I, what if I should not indeed? 'It may be you are not,' said the tempter. It may be so indeed, thought I. 'Why then,' said Satan, 'you had as good leave off, and strive no further; for if, indeed, you should not be elected, there is no hope of your being saved.'" And then the text that had perplexed him was brought again to his mind; and he, not knowing how to answer these temptations, "was driven to his wits' end," little thinking, he says, that it was "Satan had thus assaulted him," but that it was "his own prudence" that had started the question; for that none but the elect should be saved, was a doctrine he had embraced without scruple, but whether he "was one of them, *there lay the question.*"

After he had been many weeks oppressed and cast down by his doubts on this subject, and when, as he tells us, he had well nigh "given up the ghost of all his hopes," his mind was suddenly relieved and encouraged by the recollection of the following passage:—"Look

at the generations of old, and see ; did ever any trust in God and were confounded ?” This sublime appeal came to his mind with such force, “that it was as if it talked” with him. It seemed to say, “Begin at the beginning of Genesis, and read to the end of Revelation, and see if you can find that there was ever any that trusted in the Lord and was confounded.” As soon as he got home he went with a lightened heart to his Bible, to look for the text that had given him such comfort, not doubting that he should find it presently ; but, to his great surprise, he could not find it. He then asked first one good man, and then another, if they could tell him where it was ; but they knew of no such text : still he did not doubt that it was somewhere in the Bible. It was not till more than a year afterward that he met with the passage. He was then looking over some of the Apocryphal books, and found it in Ecclesiasticus ii, 16. At first, he says, he was somewhat “daunted” at finding it in the Apocrypha ; but this now troubled him the less, as by this time he had acquired “more experience of the love and kindness of God ;” and besides, as the passage contained the substance of many of the divine promises,* he conceived it to be his duty

* Psa. ix, 10 ; xviii, 30 ; xxxiv, 8 ; Prov. xxix, 25 ; xxx, 5.

to take the comfort of it, though it did not form a part of the inspired volume.

This difficulty about "election" was no sooner got over, than another "doubt" assaulted him: "How if the day of grace is past? How if you have *overstood* the time of mercy?" and, to aggravate his trouble, the tempter presented to his mind "those good people at Bedford—suggesting that these being converted already, they were all that God would save in those parts;" and that *he* had come too late; these having got the blessing before he came. He was now in great distress, thinking this might indeed be the case; and "went up and down, bemoaning his sad condition," and crying out, "O that I had turned sooner! O that I had turned seven years ago!" He was also "angry with himself," to think that he had had no more wit than to trifle away his time till his soul and heaven were lost.

From these fears he was after awhile relieved, by the recollection of another text which, he remarked, came into his mind "just about the same place where he received his other encouragement." The text was Luke xiv, 22, 23, where the servant who had been sent into the streets and lanes of the city to bring the poor, the halt, and the blind to the feast, returns

to his master, saying, "Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room;" and the lord said unto the servant, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." "These words," says Bunyan, "but especially those, 'and yet there is room,' were sweet words to me; for truly I thought that by them I saw there was place enough in heaven for me; and, moreover, that when the Lord Jesus did speak these words, he did then think of me; and that he, knowing the time would come that I should be afflicted with fear that there was no place left for me in his bosom, did speak this word, and leave it upon record, that I might find help thereby against this vile temptation. This I then verily believed."

In the "light and encouragement" which this scripture afforded, he "went a pretty while;" but it was not long before he was again "at a very great stand," and his difficulty now was to know whether he was "called" or not. He had been taught, and he believed, that there were *two* calls spoken of in the gospel—a *common* call, addressed without limitation or restriction to all men; and a *special* or *effectual* call, which was addressed to the elect only, and which alone was accompanied with any gracious in-

fluences of the Spirit. Thus, none but those who were *effectually* called could inherit the kingdom of heaven ; and Bunyan feared that he was not thus called. He read in the Gospels how the Lord said to one, " Follow me ;" and to another, " Come after me ;" and he thought, if Christ would say so to him too, how gladly would he run after him !

" I cannot now express," he says, " with what longings and breathings in my soul I cried to Christ to call me. Thus I continued for a time, all in a flame to be converted to Jesus Christ ; and did also see at that day such glory in a converted state, that I could not be contented without a share therein. Gold ! could it have been gotten for gold, what would I have given for it ! Had I had a whole world, it had all gone ten thousand times over for this, that my soul might have been in a converted state. How lovely now was every one in my eyes that I thought to be converted men and women ! They shone, they walked like a people that carried the broad seal of heaven about them. O ! I saw the lot was fallen to them in pleasant places, and they had a goodly heritage."

One passage of Scripture, or rather his interpretation of it, gave him at this period no little discouragement. It was Mark iii, 13, " He

(Jesus) went up into a mountain, and called to him whom he would, and they came unto him." "That which made me fear," he says, "was this ;—lest Christ should have no liking to me, for he called *whom he would*. But O! the glory that I saw in that condition did still so engage my heart, that I could not read of any that Christ did call, but I presently wished, Would I had been born in their clothes; would I had been born Peter; would I had been born John; or would I had been by and had heard him when he called him, how would I have cried, 'O Lord, call me also!' But O! I feared he would not call me."

In this state of doubt and anxiety he continued many months; but at last, after much time spent, and many groans to God, that he might be a partaker of the holy and heavenly calling, this text "came in upon" him: "I will cleanse their blood, that I have not cleansed, for the Lord dwelleth in Zion," Joel iii, 21. These words, he thought, were sent to encourage him to wait still upon God; and gave him some hope that if he were not already, yet the time might come when he should indeed be converted to Christ.

At this stage of our narrative we cannot refrain from making some remarks on the subject

of those distressing doubts and fears which caused Bunyan for so many months to walk in darkness and almost in despair. For these difficulties and distractions various reasons have been assigned; but we think no unprejudiced person can fail to perceive that they were mainly occasioned by his want of information on the subject of Christian experience, and his erroneous views of Christian doctrine, which enabled the tempter to take advantage of him, so that he was, to use his own words, already quoted, "tossed betwixt the devil and his own ignorance."

The theology that most prevailed in Bunyan's day held that God, without respect to character, had from all eternity elected a certain number to eternal life, while all the rest of mankind were left to perish without hope. And though the gospel calls all men, without distinction, to repentance and newness of life, it was maintained that this call was made in good faith only to the elect; all men being by nature incapable of obeying it, and the strength necessary to enable them to do so being withheld from all but the favoured subjects of irresistible grace. These unscriptural dogmas, which, by a strange perversion of language, were termed, by their advocates, the "*doctrines of grace!*" he had

“embraced without scruple,” and hence his doubts and perplexities. They were the natural result of a belief in such doctrines, and he was neither the first nor the last who by them has been driven well nigh to despair. Only let a broken-hearted penitent be fully persuaded that “God will” *not* “have all men to be saved,” and that “his tender mercies are” *not* “over all his works,” and he will hardly be persuaded to entertain any hope of mercy, until, as was the case with Bunyan, some gracious promise takes such fast hold of his mind and heart as to cast, for the time, all his preconceived notions into the shade.

After all, Bunyan rather jumped over than got fairly through his perplexities. The passages of Scripture from which he received encouragement were of general application, and of themselves contained nothing that was calculated to afford encouragement to a believer in the Calvinistic doctrines of election and reprobation. If the Scripture told *him* that “yet there is room,” it spoke the same language to every sinner in Bedford, Elstow, or elsewhere; and the same may be said of the other passages. Accordingly it appears from his own narrative that he derived his encouragement less from the *language* of the texts, than from the *way in which*

they came to him. In the course of his daily reading, for he was now a most diligent peruser of the Scriptures, he must previously have met not only with the passages he has specified, but with scores of others equally if not more encouraging; but coming to him in the ordinary way there was nothing to *strike* his attention—nothing to give them a *special* application to *himself*. It was their sudden and unexpected recurrence to his mind that excited his hopes. Of one text he says, “it *seized* upon his heart so *suddenly*—it was as if it had *talked* with him;” and of another, “it *broke in* upon his mind;” and the latter made the greater impression from the fact of its occurring in or near “the *same place* where he received his other encouragement.” “He laid,” says Mr. Philip, “much stress upon these accidents or coincidences. . . . The ripest fruit of the Tree of Life was not sweet enough for him then, unless it fell at his feet by some happy accident, or was wrapped up in other leaves than its own. In like manner, it was not enough for him to meet with truths which were lights *shining* in a dark place: they must both dart and dazzle, and that suddenly, in order to make the ‘Day-star’ of hope arise in his heart.” Coming to his mind as they did, he regarded them not in the light of

general promises, but as particular revelations to himself: he "thought they were specially sent to encourage *him*," and thus he contrived to "take the comfort of them," and still retain his Calvinistic notions, which indeed he held fast to the close of his life. His troubles on this score, however, were far from being over yet; he had still, as we shall see presently, many a severe conflict to pass through. Indeed, resting his confidence rather on sudden impulses and feelings, than on the general declarations of Scripture, it was but natural that the hopes thus inspired should fail him in his more desponding hours.

CHAPTER IV.

BUNYAN'S RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE : EXTRAORDINARY TEMPTATIONS AND CONFLICTS.

AFTER Bunyan had suffered some years of anxious perplexity respecting his spiritual state, and while his mind was still agitated between hope and fear as to the probability of his eventual conversion, he wisely resolved to open his mind to some of his Christian friends ; for hitherto, though he had long been “ a brisk talker in the matter of religion,” he had kept his doubts and conflicts to himself, a course which had doubtless contributed in no small degree to aggravate them. He now imparted his feelings and perplexities to the poor women, already mentioned, at Bedford ; and they, when they had heard his story, referred the case to Mr. Gifford, their minister.

The history of Gifford is scarcely less remarkable than that of Bunyan himself. He had taken an active part in the civil war, having been a major in the king's army. Continuing true to his cause after the ruin of his party, he engaged in an insurrection, having for its object the restoration of the king ; but he was appre-

hended, and, with eleven others, condemned to be hanged. On the eve of his intended execution, however, he was visited by his sister, who, finding the sentinels fast asleep without, and his fellow-prisoners dead drunk within, gave him the information, and urged him to embrace the opportunity to escape. He did so, and having safely passed the sleeping guards, fled to the fields, and concealed himself for three days in a ditch, during which time diligent but unavailing search was made for him in all directions. He was then, by the help of his friends, conveyed in disguise to London, and afterward to other parts of the country, finding concealment and protection in the houses of those who were attached to the royal party.

As soon as the danger was over he went to Bedford, where, exchanging the military for the medical profession, he supported himself by the practice of physic.

Gifford was at this period leading a profligate and reckless life ; notoriously abandoned to vice ; a drunkard, a swearer, and a gambler. So thoroughly did he hate the Puritans, that he often thought of killing one Anthony Harrington, for no other reason than that he was a leading man among them at Bedford. Although an habitual gambler, he was rarely a successful

one ; and having one night lost fifteen pounds, (about seventy dollars,) a large sum for a person in his circumstances, he became furious, and indulged "many desperate thoughts against God." Happening to look into one of the works of the Rev. Robert Bolton, something which he read there startled him into a sense of his own condition ; his conscience was arrested, and for a month or more he remained in a state of great distress under conviction of sin. At length the divine Spirit so enlightened his mind with respect to the way of forgiveness through Christ, that he was soon "filled with joy and peace in believing ;" and so clear and abiding was the "witness of the Spirit" to his spirit that he was a child of God, that from this period to within a few days of his death he declared, "he lost not the light of God's countenance, no, not for an hour."

Having thus "passed from death unto life," he sought an acquaintance with the people of God ; but he had been so notorious for his villainess and his enmity to religion, that they, like the disciples at Jerusalem with Saul of Tarsus, "were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple." Being however of a bold and ardent temperament, he would not be repulsed, but "would thrust himself again and

again into their company," until at last they were convinced of his sincerity, and gave him the right hand of fellowship.

Constrained by the love of Christ, he now began to speak and exhort, first in private, and afterward in a more public manner. His ministry was attended with good success, and a number believed and turned to the Lord. His next concern was to see the professing believers with whom he was connected, united together in church fellowship. He proposed the subject to them, and they set apart many days for solemn prayer, to seek direction from above. Inquiries were made into the practice of religious societies in the neighbourhood, and the Scriptures were diligently searched. At length, in the year 1650, they came to a resolution that a select number should form themselves into a body, and so lay the foundation of a Christian church; and accordingly Mr. Gifford, with eleven other "grave and serious Christians," of whom Anthony Harrington was one, "appointed a day for this solemn transaction, when they met together, and after fervent prayer, first gave themselves up to the Lord, and afterward to one another, according to the will of God. This done, they with one consent made choice of Mr. Gifford to be their pastor, or elder, to

minister to them in the things of the kingdom of Christ." The principles on which they entered into this fellowship with one another, and the conditions on which they afterward admitted those who desired to join them, were faith in Christ, and holiness of life, without respect to any difference in outward and circumstantial things.

Such was the man who now became Bunyan's spiritual adviser and pastor, and whom, in his *Pilgrim's Progress*, he has immortalized under the name of EVANGELIST.

Gifford, when informed of Bunyan's case, took occasion to talk with him on the subject, and invited him to his house, where he might hear him converse with others about the dealings of God with their souls. 'This at first served only to increase his convictions, and deepen his distress; for it led him to discover "something of the vanity and inward wickedness of his heart," and he saw "that lusts and corruptions put forth themselves within him in wicked thoughts and desires, which he did not regard (or notice) before." The effect of all this was to reduce him for a time to a state of religious despondency bordering on despair. "My desire also for heaven and life," he says, "began to fail. I found that whereas before my soul was full of longing after God, it now began

to hanker after every foolish vanity ; yea, my heart would not be moved to mind that which was good : it began to be careless, both of my soul and heaven : it would now continually hang back, both to, and in, every duty ; and was as a clog on the leg of a bird to hinder him from flying.

“ Nay, I thought, now I grow worse and worse ; now I am further from conversion than ever I was before ; wherefore I began to sink greatly in my soul, and began to entertain such discouragement in my heart, as laid me low as hell. . . . Sometimes I would tell my condition to the people of God ; which, when they heard, they would pity me, and tell me of the promises : but they had as good have told me that I must reach the sun with my finger, as have bidden me receive, or rely upon, the promises ; and as soon I should have done it. All my sense and feeling was against me ; and I saw I had a heart that would sin, and that lay under a law that would condemn. . . . I was more loathsome in mine own eyes than a toad, and I thought I was so in God’s eyes too. Sin and corruption, I said, would as naturally bubble out of my heart as water would bubble out of a fountain. I thought now that every one had a better heart than I had ; I could have changed hearts with anybody ; I thought none but the

devil himself could equalize me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. I fell therefore, at the sight of my own vileness, deeply into despair; for I concluded that this condition I was in could not stand with a state of grace. 'Sure,' thought I, 'I am forsaken of God; sure I am given up to the devil, and a reprobate mind.'

"Further, in those days I should find my heart to shut itself up against the Lord, and against his holy word. I have found my unbelief to set, as it were, the shoulder to the door, to keep him out; and that too even then when I have, with many a bitter sigh, cried, 'Good Lord, break it open: Lord, break these gates of brass, and cut these bars of iron asunder.'

"And now I was sorry that God had made me man; for *I feared I was a reprobate*. . . . Yea, I thought it impossible that ever I should attain to so much godliness of heart as to thank God that he had made me a man. . . . 'The beasts, birds, fishes, &c.,—I blessed their condition, for they had not a sinful nature; they were not obnoxious to the wrath of God; they were not to go to hell-fire after death; I could therefore have rejoiced had my condition been as any of theirs.

"But all this while, as to the act of sinning, I was never more tender than now. I durst

not take a pin, or stick, though but so big as a straw ; for my conscience now was sore, and would smart at every touch. I could not tell how to speak my words, for fear I should misplace them. O how cautiously did I then go in all I did or said ! I found myself in a miry bog, that shook if I did but stir, and was as then left both of God, and Christ, and the Spirit, and all good things."

But Bunyan was willing to bear "a wounded spirit," rather than put up with a false peace. "He dreaded," says Philip, "a seared conscience more than a sad heart." Like his own Pilgrim, he was now struggling in "the Slough of Despond;" like him too he was determined that if he got out it should be "on that side which was next the wicket gate." He says, "Though I was much troubled, and tossed, and afflicted with the sight, and sense, and terror of my own wickedness, yet I was afraid to let this sight and sense go quite off my mind ; for I found that unless guilt of conscience was *taken off the right way*, that is, by the blood of Christ, a man grew rather worse for the loss of his trouble of mind. Therefore if my guilt lay hard upon me, then would I cry that the blood of Christ might take it off ; and if it was going off without it, (for the sense of sin would be some-

times as if it would die, and go quite away,) then I would also strive to fetch it upon my heart again, . . . and would cry, 'Lord, let it not go off my heart but the right way.' " He had seen some who were once under great alarm of conscience, but who, seeking "present ease for their trouble, rather than pardon for their sin," had lost their convictions, and become more hardened and wicked than before; he feared therefore lest this should be the case with him.

In this condition he remained for many months; but at length he obtained from a sermon upon a strange text, strangely handled, that comfort which, had there not been a mist before his understanding, he might have found in every page of the gospel. The text was Solomon's Song, iv, 1, "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair!" The preacher dwelt chiefly on the words, "my love," and the following passage in his sermon fastened upon Bunyan's mind:—"If it be so, that the saved soul is Christ's love when under temptation and destruction, then, poor tempted soul, when thou art assaulted and afflicted with temptations, and the hiding of God's face, yet think on these two words, '*my love*,' still." "What," said Bunyan to himself as he was going homeward, "shall I get by thinking on these two words?"

This thought had no sooner passed through his heart but these words, "Thou art my love, thou art my love," began to kindle his spirit; "and still," he says, "as they ran in my mind, they waxed stronger and warmer, and began to make me look up; but being as yet between hope and fear, I still replied in my heart, 'But is it true; but is it true?' at which this sentence fell upon me, 'He wist not that it was *true*, which was done unto him of the angel,' Acts xii, 9.

"Then I began to give place to the word which, with power, did over and over make this joyful sound within my soul, 'Thou art my love; thou art my love; and nothing shall separate thee from my love.' And with that my heart was full of comfort and hope; and now I could believe that my sins would be forgiven me. Yea, I was now so taken with the love and mercy of God, that I remember I could not tell how to contain till I got home. I thought I could have spoken of his love, and have told of his mercy to me, even to the very crows that sat upon the ploughed lands before me, had they been capable to have understood me."

Bunyan's "wish to speak to the crows," says Mr. Philip, "is no weakness. It is not unnatural, however unusual it may be. David went lower than Bunyan, and called even on 'creep-

ing things,' as well as upon 'flying fowl and all cattle,' to praise the Lord with him. Whenever his adoring gratitude became unspeakable to his lips, or unutterable by his harp, he invariably devolved the song of praise, not only upon all the armies of heaven, but upon all the works of nature also. He turned the universe into a vast orchestra, and tuned all its voices to the melody of his own heart. Bunyan remembered this when his own harp required help; and thus wished to tell the crows his joy. The fact is, there is a 'fulness of heart' which *must* speak, and yet cannot speak fast enough, or loud enough."

So ecstatic were Bunyan's feelings at this time, that he thought he should not forget it forty years hence; "but alas!" he adds, "within less than forty days I began to question all again." About a week or fortnight afterward this text was strongly impressed upon his mind: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have thee;" and so strongly did these words seem to sound within him, and around him, that on one occasion he turned his head over his shoulder, verily thinking that some one about half a mile behind was addressing them to him; and although Simon was not his name, "yet," he says, "it made me suddenly look behind me,

believing that he that called so loud meant me." At the time, he tells us, he wondered much that this scripture should thus so often, and so loudly, be sounding and rattling in his ears ; but in the sequel he was fully persuaded that it was a warning sent from heaven to premonish him that a great cloud and storm were coming down upon him.

We now come to the most remarkable part of Bunyan's religious experience. About a month after the supposed warning mentioned in the preceding paragraph, he says, " A very great storm came down upon me, which handled me twenty times worse than all I had met with before. It came stealing upon me, now by one piece, then by another ; first, all my comfort was taken from me ; then darkness seized upon me ; after which whole floods of blasphemies, both against God, Christ, and the Scriptures, were poured upon my spirit, to my great confusion and astonishment.* These blasphemous thoughts were such as stirred up questions in

* Bunyan had evidently an eye to this part of his experience when he penned the following passage in his *Pilgrim's Progress*. It occurs in the description of Christian's passing through the Valley of the Shadow of Death : — " One thing I would not let slip : I took notice that now poor Christian was so much confounded, that *he did*

me against the very being of God, and of his only-beloved Son ; as whether there were in truth a God, or Christ ; and whether the Scriptures were not rather a fable and cunning story, than the holy and pure word of God.

“ These suggestions, with many others which at this time I may not nor dare not utter by word or pen, did make such a seizure upon my spirit, and did so overweigh my heart, both with their number, continuance, and fiery force, that I felt as if there were nothing else but these from morning to night within me ; and as though indeed there could be room for nothing else : and also concluded that God had, in very wrath to my soul, given me up to them, to be carried away with them as with a mighty whirlwind.”

His only consolation, at this time, seemed to

not know his own voice ; and thus I perceived it : just when he was come over against the mouth of the burning pit, one of the wicked ones got behind him, and stepped up softly to him, and whisperingly suggested many grievous blasphemies to him, *which he verily thought had proceeded from his own mind.* This put Christian more to it than anything that he met with before, even to think that he should now blaspheme Him that he loved so much before. Yet if he could have helped it he would not have done it ; but he had not the discretion either to stop his ears, or to know from whence those blasphemies came.”

arise from a consciousness that there was something in him which did not consent to these suggestions ; and even this conviction was generally borne down by the strength and force of the temptation. He thought himself surely possessed of the devil ; he says he was " bound in the wings of temptation, and the wind would carry him away."

" In those days," he continues, " when I have heard others talk of what was the sin against the Holy Ghost, then would the tempter so provoke me to desire to sin that sin, that I was as if I could not, must not, neither should be quiet until I had committed it. Now no sin would serve but that. If it were to be committed by speaking of such a word, then I have been as if my mouth would have spoken that word, whether I would or no ; and in so strong a measure was this temptation upon me, that often I have been ready to clap my hands under my chin, to hold my mouth from opening ; and to that end also I have had thoughts, at other times, to leap, with my head downward, into some muck hole or other, to keep my mouth from opening.

" And now my heart was at times exceeding hard. If I would have given a thousand pounds for a tear, I could not shed one ; no, nor sometimes scarce desire to shed one. I was much

dejected, to think that this should be my lot. I saw some could mourn and lament their sin; and others again could rejoice and bless God for Christ; and others again could quietly talk of, and with gladness remember, the word of God; while I only was in a storm or tempest. This much sunk me: I thought my condition was alone: I should therefore much bewail my hard hap; but get out of or get rid of these things I could not."

While this temptation lasted, which was about a year, he was most distressed when attending public worship, or reading the Scriptures, or engaged in prayer. Frequently when praying, he imagined that he felt the enemy behind him, pulling his clothes, bidding him "have done—break off—make haste—you have prayed enough," &c. When he strove hard to compose his mind, and fix it upon God, the tempter laboured to distract him, by presenting to his fancy the form of a bush, a bull, or some other material object, as if he were praying to them. "To these," says Bunyan, "he would also (at sometimes especially) so hold my mind, that I was as if I could think of nothing else, or pray to nothing else but to these, or such as these." Worse thoughts were sometimes suggested, such as, "If thou wilt fall down and worship *me*!"

Yet at times he had "strong and affecting apprehensions of God, and of the truth of the gospel;" when his heart would put forth its desires in inexpressible groanings. "My whole soul," he says, "was then in every word. I should cry with pangs after God, that he would be merciful unto me. But then I should be daunted again with such conceits as these:—that God did mock at these my prayers, saying, and that in the audience of the holy angels, 'This poor simple wretch doth hanker after me, as if I had nothing to do with my mercy but to bestow it on such as he. Alas! poor soul, how art thou deceived! It is not for thee to have favour with the Highest.'

"Then hath the tempter come upon me also with such discouragements as these: 'You are very hot after mercy, but I will cool you. This frame shall not last always. Many have been as hot as you for a spirt, but I have quenched their zeal;' and with this, such and such who were fallen off would be set before mine eyes. Then I would be afraid that I would do so too; but, thought I, I will watch, and take what care I can. 'Though you do,' said Satan, 'I shall be too hard for you. I will cool you insensibly—by degrees—by little and little. What care I, though I be seven years in chilling your heart,

if I can do it at last? Continual rocking will lull a crying child asleep. I will ply it close, but I will have my end accomplished. Though you be burning hot at present, yet I can pull you from this fire. I shall have you cold before it be long.' . . . But I thank Christ Jesus, these things did not at present make me slack my crying, but rather did put me more upon it."

Bunyan was not, however, without some brief seasons of comfort during this year of temptation. The invitation in Jer. iii, 1, "Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord," afforded him some support, as did also the fourth verse, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?" He had also "a sweet glance from 2 Cor. v, 21, 'For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' " One day, while sitting in a neighbour's house, bemoaning his sad case, and asking himself what ground one "so vile and abominable" could have to think that he should ever inherit eternal life,—this text "came *suddenly*" to his mind, "What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Those words of our Saviour, "Because I live ye shall live also," (John xiv, 19,) were likewise a help

to him. These however, he says, "were but hints, touches, and short visits, though very sweet when present; only they lasted not; but, like to Peter's sheet, of a sudden were caught up from me to heaven again. Acts x, 16.

"But afterward the Lord did more fully and graciously discover himself unto me; and indeed did quite, not only deliver me from the guilt that by these things was laid upon my conscience, but also from the very filth thereof; for the temptation was removed, and I was put into my right mind again, as other Christians were.

"I remember that one day, as I was traveling in the country, and musing on the wickedness and blasphemy of my heart, and considering the enmity that was in me to God, this scripture came into my mind, 'He hath made peace by the blood of his cross,' (Col. i, 20,) by which I was made to see, both again and again, that day, that God and my soul were friends by his blood. This was a good day to me; I hope I shall never forget it.

"At another time, as I sat by the fire in my house, and musing on my wretchedness, the Lord made this also a precious word to me,— 'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took

part of the same ; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage,' Heb. ii, 14, 15. I thought that the glory of these words was then so weighty upon me, that I was both once and twice ready to swoon as I sat ; yet not with grief and trouble, but with solid joy and peace."

From a state of the deepest despondency, Bunyan now seemed for a time to be filled with religious joy ; and his present light and peace appeared the brighter and deeper by contrast with his previous darkness and despondency. But to return to his own narrative : "Now," says he, "was my soul led from truth to truth by God ; . . . for to my remembrance there was not anything that I then cried unto God to make known and reveal unto me, but he was pleased to do it for me. I mean, not one part of the gospel of the Lord Jesus, but I was orderly led into it. Methought I saw with great evidence, from the four evangelists, the wonderful works of God, in giving Jesus Christ to save us—from his conception and birth, even to his second coming to judgment. Methought I was as if I had seen him born ; as if I had seen him grow up ; as if I had seen him walk through the

world, from the cradle to the cross ; to which also, when he came, I saw how gently he gave himself to be hanged and nailed on it for my sins and wicked doing.

“ When I have considered also the truth of his resurrection, and have remembered that word, ‘ Touch me not, Mary,’ &c., I have seen as if he had leaped out of the grave’s mouth, for joy that he was risen again, and had got the conquest over our dreadful foes, saying, ‘ I ascend unto my Father and your Father ; and to my God and to your God,’ John xx, 17. I have also, in the spirit, seen him a man, on the right hand of God the Father for me ; and have seen the manner of his coming from heaven to judge the world with glory, and have been confirmed in these things by these scriptures,—Acts i, 9–11 ; vii, 55, 56 ; x, 42 ; Heb. vii, 24 ; ix, 28 ; Rev. i, 18 ; 1 Thess. iv, 16–18.

“ Now I had, as I thought, an evidence from heaven of my salvation, with many golden seals thereon, all hanging in my sight. Now I could remember with comfort this manifestation, and the other discovery of grace ; and should often long and desire that the last day were come, that I might be for ever inflamed with the sight, and joy, and communion with Him whose head was crowned with thorns, whose face was spit

upon, and body broken, and soul made an offering for my sins. For whereas before I lay continually trembling at the mouth of hell; now methought I was got so far therefrom, that I could, when I looked back, scarce discern it; and O, thought I, that I were fourscore years old now, that I might die quickly, that my soul might be gone to rest!"

Bunyan's ardent temperament, his vivid imagination, and his simplicity, are strikingly displayed in the preceding paragraphs. His creative fancy, which gave a form and shape—almost a material existence—to the suggestions and temptations of the adversary, was equally active in his happier hours; and what he saw and felt he has recorded in language of extraordinary power, and with the sincerity and earnestness of a man who is evidently telling all his heart. It is this, in a great measure, which gives to Bunyan's experience its unique character. It is *sui generis*. Of it may be said, as was of Goliath's sword, "There is none like it," 1 Sam. xxi, 9. It cannot, therefore, as Mr. Philip well remarks, be taken as "a safe standard to try experimental knowledge by. . . . Not one mind in a thousand could have darted, like his, as with eagle-wings and eagle-eyes, from the cradle to the cross of the Saviour, realizing

every scene, as if an actual witness of the sufferings and glory of Christ. This no more belongs to divine teaching necessarily, than does the power of inventing the Pilgrim's Progress, or of depicting the Holy War."

Before Bunyan had emerged from the temptations to which he had been subjected, he had greatly longed to acquaint himself with the experience of "some *ancient* godly man," who had lived and wrote hundreds of years before ; for he seemed to think that the divines of his own day were not equal to those of former ages, and that they merely "writ what *others* felt, and studied to answer such objections as they perceived others were perplexed with, without going down *themselves* into the deep." While this desire was strong in his mind, an old copy of Luther's Commentary on the Galatians fell into his hands. It was so old, and had been so much used, that it was ready to drop to pieces if he "did but turn it over ;" but this only recommended it to Bunyan, whose imagination then connected with antiquity the idea of superior wisdom and greater depth of religious experience. He had not read far before he found his own condition "so largely and profoundly handled," and his experience so faithfully reflected in that of the great reformer, that it

seemed to him, he says, "as if the book had been written out of his own heart." The perusal of this volume produced for a time the happiest effect upon his mind. It gave him to see the source of many of his temptations and perplexities, and pointed out to him the "way to escape." So highly did he value the work, that, speaking of it many years after, he says, "I do prefer this book of Martin Luther upon the Galatians above all the books that ever I have seen, (excepting the Holy Bible,) as most fit for a wounded conscience."

Bunyan now for a season "went on his way rejoicing," and began to sing, with the Psalmist, "My mountain stands strong; I shall never be moved." He says, "Methought my soul cleaved unto Christ. . . . I felt my love to him as hot as fire; and now, as Job said, I thought I should 'die in my nest.'" His joyful assurance, however, was not of long continuance. He found that this was but a truce in his warfare; and these comforts served only to support and strengthen him for future conflicts. "For," says he, "after the Lord had thus graciously delivered me, . . . and had given me such strong consolation and blessed evidence from heaven, touching my interest in his love through Christ, the tempter came upon me again, and that with

a more grievous and dreadful temptation than before. And that was, to sell and part with this most blessed Christ; to exchange him for the things of this life—for anything. This temptation lay upon me for the space of a year; and did follow me so continually that I was not rid of it one day in a month; no, not sometimes one hour in many days together, unless when I was asleep. . . . Neither my dislike of the thought, nor yet any desire and endeavour to resist it, did in the least shake or abate the continuance or strength thereof; for it did always, in almost whatever I thought, intermix itself therewith, in such sort, that I could neither eat my food, stoop for a pin, chop a stick, or cast mine eye to look on this or that, but still the temptation would come, ‘Sell Christ for this; or sell Christ for that; sell him—sell him;’ against which, I may say, for whole hours together, I have been forced to stand as continually leaning and forcing my spirit against it, lest haply, before I was aware, some wicked thought might arise in my heart, that might consent thereto; and sometimes the tempter would make me believe I had consented to it; but then I should be as tortured upon a rack, for whole days together.

“This temptation did put me in such scares, lest I should at some time be overcome there-

with, that by the very force of my mind, in labouring to resist this wickedness, my very body would be put in action, by way of pushing or thrusting with my hands or elbows; still answering, as fast as the destroyer said, Sell him, 'I will not, I will not, I will not; no, not for thousands, thousands, thousands of worlds;' thus reckoning, lest I should, in the midst of these assaults, set too low a value on him,—even until I scarce knew where I was, or how to be composed again."

Sometimes the tempter assumed the garb of "an angel of light." "In those seasons," says Bunyan, "he would not let me eat my food in quiet; but, forsooth, when I was at the table, I must go hence to pray; I must leave my food now, and just now; so counterfeit holy would this devil be. When I was thus tempted, I would say in myself, 'Now I am at meat, let me make an end.' 'No,' said he, 'you must do it now, or you will displease God, and despise Christ.'" With these suggestions he was much distracted; for he did not at the time know their source. The truth is, the devil's counterfeit holiness deceived him; and believing these impulses to be from heaven, he felt, when he disobeyed them, as though he had broken a command of God.

But to return : " One morning," he says, " as I did lie in my bed, I was, as at other times, most fiercely assaulted with this temptation, to sell and part with Christ ; the wicked suggestion, ' Sell him, sell him,' still running in my mind as fast as a man could speak ; against which also, in my mind, as at other times, I answered, ' No, not for thousands, thousands, thousands,' at least twenty times together. But at last, after much striving, even until I was almost out of breath, I felt this thought to pass through my heart, ' Let him go if he will ;' and I thought also that I felt my heart freely consent thereto. O the diligence of Satan ! O the desperateness of man's heart !"

Here again we find Bunyan in the predicament of his Pilgrim, when the latter " did not know his own voice ;" and believing that he had now yielded to the temptation and consented to sell his Saviour, he gave himself up as irrecoverably lost. " Now," says he, " was the battle won, and down fell I, as a bird that is shot from the top of a tree, into great guilt and fearful despair. Thus getting out of my bed, I went moping into the field ; but, God knows, with as heavy a heart as mortal man, I think, could bear ; where for the space of two hours I was like a man bereft of life, and as now

past all recovery, and bound over to eternal punishment."

To add to his distress, that passage in Hebrews (xii, 16, 17) occurred to his mind, which speaks of Esau having "sold his birthright for one morsel of meat," and afterward, "when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Applying this text to his own case, he conceived that he was now certainly beyond the reach of mercy. But about ten or eleven o'clock on the same day, as he was walking under a hedge, full of sorrow and guilt, these words of the beloved disciple suddenly rushed in upon him, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John i, 7. "At the same time also," he says, "I had my sin and the blood of Christ thus represented to me,—that my sin, when compared to the blood of Christ, was no more to it than this little clod or stone before me is to the vast and wide field that here I see. . . . Now I began to conceive peace in my soul, and methought I saw as if the tempter did leer and steal away from me, as being ashamed of what he had done."

But this "modest fit of the devil," as one writer terms it, proved to be but of short dura-

tion ; he soon returned to the charge, and in a few hours Bunyan fell again into despondency. What chiefly troubled him and caused him to despair was, the passage concerning Esau, which, he says, " would lie all day long in my mind, and hold me down, so that I could by no means lift up myself ; for when I would strive to turn to this scripture or that for relief, still that sentence would be sounding in me, ' For ye know, how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.' These words were to my soul like fetters of brass to my legs, in the continual sound of which I went for several months together.

" Sometimes, indeed, I should have a *touch* from that in Luke xxii, 32, ' I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not ;' but it would not abide with me ; neither could I, indeed, when I considered my state, find ground to conceive in the least that there should be the root of that grace in me, having sinned as I had done."

In fact, he was fully persuaded that he had committed the " unpardonable sin ;" and in this opinion he was confirmed by the text concerning Esau, which, he says, stuck always with him. " And now," he adds, " I was a burden and a terror to myself ; nor did I ever so know,

as now, what it was to be weary of my life, and yet afraid to die. O! how gladly now would I have been anybody but myself,—anything but a man,—and in any condition but my own! For there was nothing did pass more frequently over my mind, than that it was *impossible* for me to be forgiven my transgression, and to be saved from the wrath to come. ‘O,’ thought I, ‘that it was with me as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me!’”

But although apparently well assured in his own mind that his case was utterly hopeless, his inclinations did not keep pace with his convictions. He was “loth and unwilling to perish,” and therefore “began to compare his sin with others,” and searched the Bible to see if he could find an account of any who had sinned as he had done, and yet had been saved. So he “considered *David’s* adultery and murder, and found them most heinous crimes; and those too committed after light and grace received;” but then he considered that David had sinned only against the law of Moses, whereas *he* had sinned “against the gospel,—yea, against the Mediator thereof;”—he had “sold his Saviour.” So he could find no ground of comfort here.

Next he considered the sin which *Peter* committed in denying his Master; and this, he

thought, came nighest to his of any that he could find ; for Peter had, like him, denied his Saviour, and that too after light and mercy received, and warning given. "I also," says Bunyan, "considered that he did it once and twice, and that after time to consider betwixt. But although I put all these circumstances together, that if possible I might find help, yet I considered again that his was but a *denial* of his Master, but mine was a *selling* of my Saviour. Wherefore I thought with myself, that I came nearer to *Judas* than either to David or Peter."

And now his belief in the doctrines of unconditional reprobation, and God's partial love, helped again to point and poison the arrow which pierced him, and to rivet the chain with which his spirit was bound. "Here," he says, "my torment would flame out and afflict me ; yea, it would grind me, as it were, to powder, to consider the preservation of God toward *others*, while *I* fell into the snare ; for in my thus considering of other men's sins, and comparing them with mine own, I could evidently see that God preserved them, notwithstanding their wickedness, and *would not let them*, as he had *me*, become a son of perdition. . . . Ah, how safely did I see them walk whom God had hedged in ! *They* were within his care, protec-

tion, and special providence. Though they were full as bad as I by nature, yet *because he loved them* he would not suffer *them* to fall without the range of mercy; but as for *me*, I was gone,—I had done it; he *would not* preserve me, nor keep me, but suffered me, *because I was a reprobate*, to fall as I had done. . . . Now I saw that as God had his hand in all the providences and dispensations that overtook *his elect*, so he had his hand in all the temptations that they had to sin against him. . . . He would let David, Hezekiah, Solomon, Peter, and others fall, but he would not let them fall into sin unpardonable, nor into hell for sin. O, thought I, *these be the men that God hath loved!* . . . As all things wrought together for the best, and to do good to them that were the called according to his purpose, so I thought that all things wrought for damage, and for my eternal overthrow.”

He now set himself again to compare his imaginary crime with the sin of Judas, that he might, if possible, find some such difference between them as that he might reasonably conclude his own was not unpardonable; and, by considering, he found that Judas’s sin was committed “intentionally—with much deliberation,” while *his* has been done “in a fearful hurry—on a sudden”—and in spite of “prayer and

strivings" to the contrary. This consideration for awhile afforded him some relief; but it was only like a passing gleam of sunshine, for the sound of Esau's fate was constantly ringing in his ears, and did so "break and confound his spirit, that he could not tell what to do," and sometimes thought he should lose his wits. "O!" he says, "no one knows the terrors of those days but myself. . . . I was often now ashamed that I should be like such an *ugly* man as Judas. I thought also how loathsome I should be unto all the saints in the day of judgment; insomuch that I could scarce see a good man, that I believed had a good conscience, but I should feel my heart tremble at him, while I was in his presence."

He was now tempted to seek relief by embracing infidelity, if not atheism; the tempter suggesting, that even if there *should* be a future state and a day of judgment, yet by believing the contrary he could lose nothing, and would at least attain present ease; and as he *must* perish at last, it was not worth while to torment himself beforehand. But whenever these thoughts entered his mind, he would have at the same time such a realizing sense of death and the judgment, that both appeared, as it were, in his view—within a step—as though they

were come already, and the Judge standing at the door; so that this temptation received no entertainment.

He found it hard work, however, to pray to God, because *despair was swallowing him up*. "I thought," he says, "I was, as with a tempest, driven away from God; for always when I cried for mercy this would come in, 'Tis too late—I am lost—God hath let me fall—my sin is unpardonable.'"

About this time he met with the narrative of the awful death of Francis Spira, the reading of which, he says, "was to his troubled spirit *as salt rubbed into a fresh wound*." One expression of the dying apostate was especially fearful to him: "Man knows the beginning of sin, but who bounds the issues thereof?"

The text, "He hath received gifts for the rebellious," (Psa. lxiii, 18,) would sometimes come into his mind. "The rebellious," thought he, "why they are such as have taken up arms against their prince after they have once sworn subjection to his government; and this is my very condition; I once loved him, feared him, served him; but now I am a rebel; I have sold him; I have said, 'Let him go if he will:' but yet he hath gifts for *rebels*; and then why not for *me*?" But when he attempted to take "some

small refreshment" from this text, he "missed of his desire," and was "driven with force beyond it;" he was, he says, like a man hurried to execution, past some place "where he would fain creep in and hide himself, but may not."

Bunyan had already compared his offence with those of the ancient saints, and concluded that his outweighed any of theirs. He now began to view the matter over again, and set it in this light,—What if I should put all theirs together, and mine alone against them, might I not then find encouragement? He conceived that if his sin, though bigger than any *one* of theirs, should be but equal to all, there might still be hope in his case; seeing that the blood which atoned for the whole of theirs had virtue enough to atone for his one, although it *should* be as large as all theirs put together. Hence he says, "Here again I should consider the sin of David, and Solomon, and the rest of the great offenders; and should also labour, what I might with fairness, to aggravate and heighten their sins by several circumstances. I should think with myself that David shed blood to cover his adultery, and that by the sword of the children of Ammon; a work that could not be done but by contrivance, which was a great aggravation to his sin. . . . Then I thought on Solomon, and

how he sinned in loving strange women, in falling away to their idols, in building them temples, in doing this after light in his old age, after mercy received. . . . I would then add to these men's sins the sins of Manasseh ; how that he built altars for idols in the house of the Lord ; he also observed times, used enchantments, burned his children in the fire, in sacrifice to devils, and made the streets of Jerusalem to run down with the blood of innocents. These, thought I, are great sins, sins of a bloody colour. . . . But then would this turn upon me,—‘ Ah ! but these were but sins against the *law*, from which there was a Jesus sent to save them : but yours is a sin against the Saviour, and who shall save you from that ?’

“ This one consideration would always kill my heart,—my sin was point blank against my Saviour ; and that too at that height that I had in my heart said of him, ‘ Let him go if he will.’ O ! methought this sin was bigger than the sins of a country, of a kingdom, or of the whole world ; no one unpardonable, nor all of them together was able to make mine ; mine outwent them every one.

“ Now I should find my mind to flee from God as from the face of a dreadful judge ; yet this was my torment, I could not escape his

hand : ' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' But, blessed be his grace, that scripture, in these flying fits, would call, as running after me, ' I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins ; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.' This, I say, would come in upon my mind when I was fleeing from the face of God ; for I *did* flee from his face, that is, my mind and spirit fled before him : then would the text cry, ' Return unto me ;' it would cry aloud with a very great voice, ' Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee,' Isa. xliv, 22. Indeed, this would make me a little stop, and, as it were, *look over my shoulder behind me*, to see if I could discern that the grace of God did follow me with a pardon in his hand ; but I could no sooner do that, but all would be clouded and darkened again by that sentence, ' For you know, how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected ; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.' Wherefore I could not refrain, but fled, though at sometime it cried, ' Return, return,' as if it did *halloo* after me : but I feared to close in therewith, lest it should not come from God ; for that other, [about Esau,] as I said, was sounding in my conscience."

CHAPTER V.

BUNYAN'S RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE : SPIRITUAL
CONFLICTS : DELIVERANCE : REMARKS.

THE remarkable relation which follows appeared to Bunyan himself, accustomed as he was to preternatural impressions, so extraordinary and unaccountable in its character, that when he wrote his narrative, many years after, he hesitated to include it, and actually withheld it from the first edition. We give it entire, in his own words :—"Once as I was walking to and fro in a good man's shop, bemoaning of myself in a sad and doleful state, afflicting myself with self-aborrence for this wicked and ungodly thought ; lamenting also this hard hap of mine, for that I should commit so great a sin, greatly fearing that I should not be pardoned ; praying also in my heart, that if this sin of mine did differ from that against the Holy Ghost, the Lord would shew it me ; and being now ready to sink with fear, suddenly there was, as if there had rushed in at the window, the noise of wind upon me, but very pleasant, and as if I heard a voice speaking, ' Didst thou ever refuse to be justified by the blood of Christ ? ' And withal,

my whole life of profession past was in a moment opened to me, wherein I was made to see, that designedly I had not : so my heart answered groaningly, 'No.' Then fell with power that word upon me, 'See that ye refuse not him that speaketh,' Heb. xii, 25. This made a strange seizure upon my spirit ; it brought light with it, and commanded a silence in my heart, of all those tumultuous thoughts that did before use, like masterless hell-hounds, to roar and bellow, and make an hideous noise within me. It shewed me also that Jesus Christ had yet a word of grace and mercy for me ; that he had not, as I had feared, quite forsaken and cast off my soul ; yea, this was a kind of check for my proneness to desperation ; a kind of threatening of me, if I did not, notwithstanding my sins, and the heinousness of them, venture my salvation upon the Son of God. But as to my determining about this strange dispensation, what it was I know not ; or from whence it came I know not ; I have not yet in twenty years' time been able to make a judgment of it. I thought then what here I should be loath to speak. But verily that sudden rushing wind was as if an *angel* had come upon me ; but both it and the salvation I will leave until the day of judgment : only this I say, it commanded a great

calm in my soul ; it persuaded me there might be hope ; it shewed me, as I thought, what the sin unpardonable was, and that my soul had yet the blessed privilege to flee to Jesus Christ for mercy. But I say, concerning this dispensation, I know not what to say unto it yet ; which was also, in truth, the cause that at first I did not speak of it in the book ; I do now also leave it to be thought on by men of sound judgment. I lay not the stress of my salvation thereupon, but upon the Lord Jesus in the promise ; yet seeing I am here unfolding my secret things, I thought it might not be altogether inexpedient to let this also shew itself, though I cannot now relate the matter as there I did experience it."

But the struggle was not yet over. The "savour" of this "strange dispensation," as he calls it, lasted only about three or four days, and then he began to mistrust, and despair again. "Wherefore," he says, "my life still hung in doubt before me, not knowing which way I should *tip* ; only this I found my soul desire, even to cast itself at the foot of grace, by prayer and supplication. But O ! it was hard for me now to have the *face* to pray to this Christ for mercy, against whom I had thus vilely sinned ; . . . and indeed I have found it as difficult to come to God by prayer, after backsliding from him,

as to do any other thing. . . . But I saw that there was but one way with me ; I must go to him, and humble myself unto him, and beg that he, of his wonderful mercy, would shew pity to me, and have mercy on my wretched, sinful soul."

But here the adversary strongly suggested, that prayer would not avail in his case, seeing he had rejected the Mediator, without whom no prayers came to God with acceptance ; therefore if he prayed now he would only add sin to sin, and offend the Lord more than he had ever done before. For God, urged the tempter, hath been weary of you these several years already, because you are none of his : your bawling in his ears hath been no pleasant voice to him ; and therefore he let you sin this sin, that you might be quite cut off ; and will you pray still ? " This," says Bunyan, " the devil urged, and set forth that in Numbers xiv, where Moses said to the children of Israel, that because they would not go up to possess the land when God would have them, therefore for ever he did bar them out from thence, though they prayed they might with tears. It is said in another place, ' The man that sins presumptuously shall be taken from God's altar, that he may die,' (Exod. xxi, 14,) even as Joab was by King Solomon, when he thought to find shelter there. These places did

pinch me very sore ; yet my case being desperate, I thought with myself, I can but die ; and if it must be so, it shall *once* be said, ‘ That such an one died at the foot of Christ in prayer.’ This I did, but with great difficulty, God doth know ; and that because, together with this, still that saying about Esau would be set at my heart, even like ‘ a flaming sword,’ to ‘ keep the way of the tree of life,’ lest I should take thereof and live. O ! who knows how hard a thing I found it to come to God in prayer !

“ I did also desire the prayers of the people of God for me ; but I feared that God would give them no heart to do it ; yea, I trembled in my soul to think, that some or other of them would shortly tell me that God had said those words to them, that he once did say to the prophet, concerning the children of Israel, ‘ Pray not for this people, for I have rejected them,’ Jer. xi, 4. So, ‘ Pray not for him, for I have rejected him,’ 1 Sam. xvi, 1. Yea, I thought that he had whispered this to some of them already, only they durst not tell me so ; neither durst I ask them of it, for fear if it should be so it would make me quite beside myself.”

About this time he opened his mind to an “ ancient Christian,” from whom, however, he received but cold consolation ; for when he had

told him his case, and that he feared he had committed the unpardonable sin, his friend replied, that "*he thought so too!*" Happily his opinion seems to have had but little weight with Bunyan, who comforted himself on finding, by further conversation with him, that, though a good man, he was "a stranger to much combat with the devil." He therefore betook himself again to prayer, as well as he could, but in such a state of mind that the most full and gracious promises of the gospel were his greatest torment. "Yea," he says, "nothing so afflicted me as the thought of Jesus Christ; the remembrance of my Saviour (because I had cast him off) brought the villany of my sin, and my loss by it, to mind. Nothing did *twinge* my conscience like this. Everything that I thought of the Lord Jesus, of his grace, love, goodness, kindness, gentleness, meekness, death, promises, blessed exhortations, comforts, and consolations, it went to my soul like a sword; for still unto these my considerations of the Lord Jesus, these thoughts would make place for themselves in my heart,—‘Ah, this is the Jesus, the loving Saviour, the Son of God, whom you have parted with, whom you have slighted, despised, and abused.’ . . . O! thought I, what have I lost; what have I parted

with ! What has disinherited my poor soul ! . . . I could not bear to think of the ‘wrath of the Lamb,’ in that great day of his wrath, when no rebels to his authority will be able to stand. I also trembled, as I have said, at the sight of the saints of God ; . . . for they did, both in their words, their carriage, and all their expressions of tenderness and fear to sin against their precious Saviour, condemn, and also add continual affliction and shame unto my soul. The dread of them was upon me, and I trembled at God’s Samuels. 1 Sam. xvi, 4.

“Now also the tempter began afresh to mock my soul another way, saying, ‘That Christ indeed did pity my case, and was very sorry for my loss ; but forasmuch as I had sinned and transgressed as I had done, he could by no means help me, nor save me from what I feared : for my sin was not of the nature of theirs for whom he bled and died ; neither was it counted with those that were laid to his charge, when he hanged on a tree : therefore, unless he should come down from heaven, and *die anew for this sin*, (though indeed he did greatly pity me,) yet I could have no benefit of him.’ These things may seem ridiculous to others, even as ridiculous as they were in themselves, but to me they were most tormenting cogitations :

every one of them augmented my misery, that Jesus Christ should have so much love as to *pity* me, when yet he could not *help* me too: nor did I think that the reason why he could not help me was, because his merits were weak, or his grace and salvation spent on others already, but because his faithfulness to his threatenings would not *let* him extend his mercy to me. Besides, I thought, as I have already hinted, that my sin was not within the bounds of that pardon that was wrapped up in a promise; and if not, then I knew surely that it was more easy for heaven and earth to pass away, than for me to have eternal life. . . . But O! how this would add to my affliction, to conceit that I should be guilty of such a sin for which he did not die! These thoughts did so confound me, and imprison me, and tie me up from faith, that I knew not what to do. O, thought I, that he would come down again! O that the work of man's redemption was yet to be done by Christ! how would I pray him, and entreat him to count and reckon this sin among the rest for which he died! But this scripture would strike me down as dead, 'Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over him,' Rom. vi, 9.

"Thus I was always sinking, whatever I

did think or do. So one day I walked to a neighbouring town, and sat down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to ; and after long musing, I lifted up my head, but methought I saw, as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give light ; and as if the *stones in the streets*, and the *tiles upon the houses*, did bend themselves against me. Methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world. . . . O how happy now was every creature to what I was ! for they stood fast, and kept their station, but I was gone and lost. Then breaking out in the bitterness of my soul, I said to my soul, ‘How can God comfort such a wretch as I am?’ I had no sooner said it, but this returned upon me, as an echo doth answer a voice, ‘This sin is not unto death,’ at which I was as if I had been raised out of the grave, and cried out again, ‘Lord, how couldst thou find out such a word as this?’ for I was filled with admiration at the fitness, and at the unexpectedness of the sentence. . . . I was now, for the time, out of doubt as to that about which I was so much in doubt before. . . . Now, thought I, if this sin is not unto death, then it is pardonable ; therefore from this I have encouragement to come to God by

Christ for mercy. . . . None but those that know (by their own experience) what my trouble was, can tell what relief came to my soul by this consideration : it was a release to me from my former bonds, and a shelter from my former storms. I seemed now to stand upon the same ground with other sinners, and to have as good right to the word and prayer as any of them.

“ But O ! how Satan did now *lay about him* for to bring me down again ! But he could by no means do it, neither this day, nor the most part of the next ; for this sentence stood like a mill-post at my back. Yet toward the evening of the next day I felt this word begin to leave me, and to withdraw its supportation from me, and so I returned to my old fears again, but with a great deal of grudging and peevishness ; for I feared the sorrow of despair.

“ But the next day at evening, being under many fears, I went to seek the Lord ; and as I prayed my soul cried to him in these words, with strong cries, ‘ O Lord, I beseech thee, shew me that thou hast loved me with an everlasting love ! ’ I had no sooner said it, but with sweetness this returned upon me, as an echo, ‘ I have loved thee with an everlasting love. ’ Now I went to bed in quiet ; also when I awaked the next morning it was fresh upon my

soul, and I believed it. . . . I had also, for several days together, very much sweetness, and comfortable hopes of pardon.”

But before many weeks had elapsed he began to despond again, fearing lest after all he might be deceived, and meet with a disappointment at last; for the old text about Esau was again brought to his mind, and also some other similar passages, which he thought effectually cut him off from all hopes of mercy. “Now,” he says, “was the word of the gospel forced from my soul. . . . I felt myself to sink into a gulf, as an house whose foundation is destroyed: I did liken myself in this condition unto the case of a child that was fallen into a mill-pit, who, though it could make some shifts to scramble and sprawl in the water, yet because it could find hold neither for hand nor foot, therefore at last it must die in that condition. . . . But while these scriptures lay before me, and laid sin anew at my door, that saying, ‘And he spake a parable to them, to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint,’ with others, did encourage me to prayer. Then the tempter again laid at me very sore, suggesting, ‘that neither the mercy of God, nor yet the blood of Christ, did at all concern me, nor could they help me for my sin; therefore it was in vain to

pray.' Yet thought I, '*I will pray.*' 'But,' said the tempter, 'your sin is unpardonable.' 'Well,' said I, '*I will pray.*' 'It is to no boot,' said he. 'Yet,' said I, '*I will pray!*' So I went to prayer to God; and while I was at prayer, I uttered words to this effect,—'Lord, Satan tells me that neither thy mercy, nor Christ's blood, is sufficient to save my soul. Lord, shall I honour thee most, by believing thou wilt and canst? or him, by believing thou neither wilt nor canst? Lord, I would fain honour thee, by believing thou wilt and canst.' And as I was thus before the Lord, that scripture fastened on my heart, 'O man, great is thy faith,' even as if one had clapped me on the back, as I was on my knees before God: yet I was not able to believe that this was a prayer of faith, till almost six months after; for I could not think that I had faith, or that there should be a word for me to act faith on; therefore I should still be as sticking in the jaws of desperation, and went mourning up and down in a sad condition.

"At another time, I remember, I was again much under this question, 'Whether the blood of Christ was sufficient to save my soul?' in which doubt I continued from morning till about seven or eight at night: and at last, when I was, as it were, quite worn out with fear, these words

did sound suddenly within my heart, 'He is able,' Heb. vii, 25. But methought this word 'able' was spoke *loud* unto me; it shewed a great word, it seemed to be writ in large letters, and gave such a jostle to my fear and doubt (I mean for the time it tarried with me, which was about a day) as I never had from that time, all my life, either before or after."

One morning, after this, while he was again at prayer, trembling under the fear that no word of God could help him, this "*piece* of a sentence *darted in*" upon him, "My grace is sufficient," 1 Cor. xii, 9. About a fortnight before he had looked at that very text, but thinking it could afford no comfort to his soul, had "thrown down the book in a pet." Then he thought it was not *large enough* for *him*; but now it was as if it had arms of grace so wide that it could enclose not only him, but many more besides. By this text (or rather part of a text) he was sustained for seven or eight weeks, yet not without many conflicts; for his peace "would be *in* and *out* twenty times a day; comfort now, and trouble presently." This text about the sufficiency of grace, and that about Esau's parting with his birthright, would be "like a pair of scales in his mind; sometimes one would be uppermost, sometimes the other; according to which would

be his peace or troubles." He therefore prayed to God that he would help him to apply the *whole* sentence, which as yet he was not himself able to do. " 'That He gave,' " says Bunyan, " that I gathered ; but further I could not go, for as yet it only helped me to believe there *might* be mercy for me. 'My grace is sufficient,' answered my former question ; to wit, that there was hope ; yet because 'for *thee*' was left out, I was not contented, but prayed to God for *that* also. Wherefore, one day, as I was in a meeting of God's people, full of sadness and terror, for my fears again were strong upon me, these words did with great power suddenly break in upon me, 'My grace is sufficient for thee ; my grace is sufficient for thee ; my grace is sufficient for thee,' three times together. And O ! methought every word was a *mighty* word unto me, as MY, and GRACE, and SUFFICIENT, and FOR THEE ; they were then, and sometimes are still, far *bigger* than others be. . . . I was as though I had seen the Lord Jesus look down from heaven through the *tiles* upon me, and direct these words unto me. 'This sent me mourning home ; it broke my heart, and filled me full of joy, and laid me low in the dust ; only it stayed not long with me,—I mean in this glory and refreshing comfort ; yet it

continued with me for several weeks, and did encourage me to hope. But as soon as that powerful operation of it was taken from my heart, that other about Esau returned upon me as before : so my soul did hang as in a pair of scales again, sometimes up, and sometimes down ; now in peace, and anon again in terror.

“ I remember one day, as I was in divers frames of spirit, and considering that these frames were according to the nature of the several scriptures that came in upon my mind ; if this of *grace*, then was I quiet ; but if that of *Esau*, then tormented. Lord, thought I, if both these scriptures should meet in my heart at once, I wonder which of them would get the better of me. So methought I had a longing mind that they might both come together upon me ; yea, I desired of God they might. Well, about two or three days after, so they did indeed ; they *bolted* both upon me at a time, and did work and struggle strongly in me for awhile. At last that about Esau’s birthright began to wax weak, and withdraw, and vanish ; and this, about the sufficiency of grace, prevailed with peace and joy. And as I was in a muse about this thing, that scripture came in upon me, ‘ Mercy rejoiceth against judgment,’ James ii, 13. This was a wonderment to me ; yet truly, I am apt to think

it was of God ; for the word of the law and wrath must give place to the word of life and grace ; because, though the word of condemnation be glorious, yet the word of life and salvation doth far exceed in glory. 2 Cor. iii, 7-9.

“ This scripture did also most sweetly visit my soul, ‘ And him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out,’ John vi, 37. O the comfort that I had from this word, ‘ *in no wise !*’ . . . But Satan would greatly labour to pull this promise from me, telling of me, ‘ That Christ did not mean me, and such as I, but sinners of a lower rank, that had not done as I had done !’ But I would answer him again, ‘ Satan, here is in these words no such exception ; but him that comes—him—any him ; him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.’ . . . If ever Satan and I did strive for any word of God in all my life, it was for this good word of Christ ; he at one end and I at the other. O, *what work we made !* It was for this in John, I say, that we did so tug and strive ; he pulled and I pulled ; but God be praised, I overcame him ; I got sweetness from it.”

Being now in a great measure delivered from the temptation which had so long weighed down his spirit, Bunyan set himself to consider more clearly the character of his offence, and care-

fully to “weigh the scope and tendency” of those “most fearful and terrible scriptures” with which he had been “so greatly affrighted, yea, had had much ado a hundred times to forbear wishing out of the Bible.” The conclusion he came to was, that as his sin had not been committed deliberately, nor yet consented to at the time, he was not cut off from mercy by the passages that had so greatly alarmed him, but which, on a closer examination, he found did not “look so grimly” as they had formerly done.

“And now,” he says, “remained only the hinder part of the tempest ; for the thunder was gone beyond me ; only some drops did still remain, that now and then would fall upon me : but because my former frights and anguish were very sore and deep, therefore it oft befell me still, as it befalleth those that have been scared with fire ;—I thought every voice was ‘ Fire ! fire ! ’ Every little touch would hurt my tender conscience.”

But one day, as he was walking in the field, having still some *dashes* on his conscience, fearing lest all was not yet right, suddenly this sentence occurred to him, “ Thy righteousness is in heaven ; ” and “ methought,” he says, “ I saw with the eyes of my soul Jesus Christ at God’s right hand—there, I say, as my righteousness—

for my righteousness was Christ himself, 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed ; I was loosed from my afflictions and irons ; my temptations also fled away ; so that from that time those dreadful scriptures of God left off to trouble me. Now went I also home rejoicing, for the grace and love of God ; so when I came home I looked to see if I could find that sentence, 'Thy righteousness is in heaven,' but could not find such a saying, (in the Bible,) wherefore my heart began to sink again, only that was brought to my remembrance, 'He is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,' 1 Cor. i, 30 ; by this word I saw the other sentence true."

Having finished his relation of the "sorrow and affliction" which for more than two years he had endured by reason of the "guilt and terror" which this temptation had laid him under ; and also given an account of his deliverance therefrom, the "sweet and blessed comfort" of which abode with him for almost a twelvemonth to his "unspeakable admiration," he next proceeds to state what he considered to have been the causes of his falling under this temptation. These causes he conceives to have been the following : First, that he did not, when deli-

vered from his former temptation, pray that he might be kept from future ones. He "prayed only," he tells us, "or at the most principally, for the removal of present troubles," and neglected to pray that God would "keep him from the evil that was to come;" according to what is written, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation," Luke xxii, 40. The other reason he assigns was, that on one occasion, when doubt and unbelief assailed him, he had tempted God by asking of him a sign whereby he might be assured that the secret thoughts of the heart were known to him. This, he tells us, was about a year and a half before that extraordinary temptation fell upon him.

It would thus appear that he regarded the "fiery trial" with which he was tried as being either a natural consequence of an omission of duty, or a judicial visitation for what he conceived to be a sin of presumption; but we suspect that few of our readers will consider either or both the causes he assigns as sufficiently accounting for that wilderness of temptation in which he so long wandered, and his passage through which was not less terrible than that of his own Pilgrim through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Many circumstances, in addition to those we

have already mentioned, (pp. 52–56,) doubtless concurred to occasion and aggravate Bunyan's religious terrors. Not the least of these was the want of some suitable mental occupation. Having just emerged from the grossness and vulgarity in which he had wasted his earlier years, his strong and active mind was rapidly developing itself, and he now needed some other kind of employment besides that of "tinkering"—something that would have enlisted his feelings and required the exercise of his thoughts: for the want of this his mind, having nothing else on which to operate, naturally began to prey upon itself, and his thoughts were continually fixed on his spiritual state. A strong imagination thus working upon a tender and not very enlightened conscience, could scarcely fail, in an individual holding the opinions which Bunyan did, and circumstanced as he was, to sink him to the deepest despondency. "He wanted something to *do* that would have expended the surplus energies of his mind, or compelled him to think of others as well as of himself. Had Gifford set him to teach the poor children of Elstow to read the Bible, on the sabbath evenings or mornings, as well as set him to the study of his own heart and experience, Bunyan would have *plunged* into the work,

and thus lost sight of himself for the time in the pleasure of doing good. When he began to preach and write for the benefit of others, he soon got over his personal fears.”—*Philip*.

The desultory manner in which he had read the Scriptures was also far from being calculated to settle the mind of a person harassed with doubts and fears, and possessing but little experience in spiritual things. Fixing his mind on detached sentences, without properly regarding the connection in which they stood, he was often cast down and almost in despair by the misapplication of texts which had no bearing on his case, as he afterward found when he set himself calmly and diligently to consider their “scope and tendency.”

Something must also be attributed to the character of the times in which he lived. The wildest opinions of every kind were abroad in the land, especially on the subject of religion ; the most strange and fanatical doctrines were industriously propagated, with “every wind” of which the ignorant and unstable were in danger of being “carried away.” Bunyan, it is true, was mercifully preserved from embracing these errors, yet, being continually presented to his notice, they could not fail to add to the perplexity of a mind exercised as his then was.

But the question will naturally arise, How far may Bunyan's temptations be attributed to the *immediate* agency of the evil one, to which he was accustomed, to the close of his life, to ascribe them? There are some who ridicule the idea of Satan's exercising any direct influence upon the human mind, while others, running into the opposite extreme, refer to his immediate operation every temptation and evil suggestion with which the mind is assailed, thus clothing him almost with the attribute of omnipresence. The doctrine of the existence and agency of evil spirits is too plainly revealed in Scripture to allow any Christian to doubt; but it will often be difficult to determine when a man is "tempted of the devil," and when he is "drawn away of his own lust and enticed." There are, however, observes Mr. Philip, "cases in which it may safely be said, as in the case of sowing tares, 'an enemy hath done this.' . . . When blasphemies which are abhorrent to the mind, and which can be traced to no blasphemous book nor bad example, are yet rushing to the lips, and raging in the thoughts, and maddening the imagination, although the victim of them would give worlds to get rid of them, they may be safely ascribed to Satanic suggestion. Christ says, indeed, that blasphemies proceed out of

the heart ; but he does not say that they do so against the *will*, nor in spite of the prayer and effort of the heart to suppress and forget them. In such a case they are most likely what old Ambrose calls them, ‘rather fire-balls thrown into a house, than flames from its own hearth.’ ”

Bunyan gives a much more satisfactory account of the advantages he derived from the severe conflict through which he had just passed, than of the causes which led to it. Before this he had often been assaulted with “unbelief, and questions about the being of God, the truth of the word, and the certainty of the world to come ;” but now these atheistical doubts ceased to molest him.

The agonizing distress he had suffered from the application of certain texts which he supposed to place him beyond the reach of mercy, and the strong consolation he received when he was enabled to lay hold by faith on some Scripture promise, gave him such a sense of the power and verity of the word of God, as he had never before experienced. ‘The Scriptures, he tells us, were “wonderful things unto him ;” one sentence, that seemed to set itself against him, would “more afflict and terrify his mind than an army of forty thousand men that might come against him.”’

He was also led to see more into the nature of the promises than before ; for this temptation had made him “ with careful heart, and watchful eye, with great fearfulness to turn over every leaf ; and with much diligence, mixed with trembling, to consider every sentence, together with its natural force and latitude.” Before this, if he did not *feel comfort* as soon as a promise presented itself to his mind, he put it by as not meant for him ; “ but now,” he says, “ it was no time thus to do ; the ‘ avenger of blood ’ did too hardly pursue me. Therefore I was glad to catch at that word, which yet I feared I had no ground or right to own ; and even to *leap into the bosom of that promise that yet I feared did shut its heart against me*. Now also I would labour to take the word as God hath laid it down, without restraining the natural force of one syllable thereof ;” considering “ that God had a bigger mouth to speak with, than I had a heart to conceive with. . . . I would in these days, often in my greatest agonies, even *flounce* toward the promise, as the horses do toward sound ground that yet stick in the mire ; concluding, though as one almost bereft of his wits through fear, on this will I rest and stay, and leave the fulfilling of it to the God of heaven that made it.”

CHAPTER VI.

BUNYAN JOINS THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT BEDFORD : HE BEGINS TO PREACH.

AFTER Bunyan had thus been taken out of the horrible pit and miry clay of despair, he united himself with the Baptist Church at Bedford, under the pastoral care of Mr. Gifford. This was in 1655,* when he was about twenty-seven years of age. We have already stated, although this was professedly a Baptist Church, they did not make adult baptism a term of membership, nor consider a difference of sentiment on that subject a bar to communion at the Lord's table. The only condition required of those who wished to join them was, a profession of faith in Christ, attended with holiness of life; consequently there were many Pedobaptists among them. A majority of the members, however,

* Mr. Philip says in 1653; but this is evidently an error. He takes that date from Ivimey, who gives, as his authority, the Life of Bunyan prefixed to Heptinstall's edition of the Pilgrim's Progress; but on referring to that Life I find that the date given *there* is 1655. Scott gives the same date, as does also an old Memoir prefixed to some editions of the Pilgrim, and written by one who was a contemporary of Bunyan, and acquainted with him.

were Baptists, as was Bunyan himself, who, though he mentions not the fact in his narrative, was admitted by baptism, the ceremony being probably performed in the River Ouse. The only account he gives of his reception is the following :—"I propounded to the church, that my desire was to walk in the order and ordinances of Christ with them, and was also admitted by them." *

Bunyan's conversion exerted an influence for good on some of those who had been his companions in sin. He tells us that he had "infected all the youth of the town where he was born with all manner of youthful vanities;" but on his reformation, he says, "the contagion was much allayed all the town over. When God made me sigh, they would hearken, and inquiringly say, 'What is the matter with John?' . . . When I went out to seek the bread of life, some of them would follow, and the rest be put into a muse at home. Yea, almost the town, at first, at times, would go out to hear at the place where I found good; yea, young and old for awhile

* This church has ever since continued to be governed by the same liberal and Christian principles as those on which it was first organized. At the present day, however, a majority of the members, as well as the pastor, (the Rev. Samuel Hillyard,) are said to be Pedobaptists.

had some reformation on them: also some of them, perceiving that God had mercy upon me, came crying to him for mercy too."

When he first began to communicate with his brethren in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, these words of our Saviour, "Do this in remembrance of me," were very "precious" to him; "for by them," he says, "the Lord did *come down* upon my conscience with the discovery of his death for my sins; and as I then felt, did as if he *plunged* me in the virtue of the same."* But he had not been long a partaker of this ordinance before he was assailed therein with fierce temptations "both to blaspheme the ordinance, and to wish some deadly thing to those that did then eat thereof;" so that he found it needful "to bend himself all the while to pray to God, lest he should at any time be guilty of consenting to these wicked and fearful thoughts." The cause of his being harassed, when at the sacrament, with these temptations, which he continued to be for about nine months, he afterward thought was, because he did not at the first approach with becoming reverence to partake thereof.

* There seems to me in this passage an intended use of terms which should express the views of both classes in his church on the mode of baptism.—*Philip*.

No one who has read the previous part of this narrative will be surprised to hear that Bunyan's health was at this time in such a state that he was thought to be in a consumption. Indeed, "the only wonder," as Mr. Philip remarks, "is, that this did not occur sooner: for as Bunyan was highly nervous, as well as sensitive, his health was as much endangered as his spirits," by his long-continued mental excitement and suffering. "Even his happy moments were perilous to health; and will remind some readers of the emphatic lines of a Scotch poet,—

‘O! hold my head!

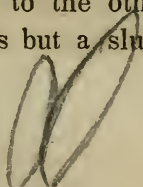
This gush o' pleasure's like to be my *dead*.’

He had indeed an iron frame; and he needed it, for he had a soul of fire. The latter, however, *overheated* the former at last, and for a time seemed consuming it."

Being, by a sudden and violent attack, reduced to such extreme weakness that he "thought he could not live," he set himself, according to his "usual course in the day of affliction," to examine afresh into his spiritual state, and his interest in the life to come. But, he tells us, he had no sooner begun to recall to his mind his former experience of the goodness of God to his soul, than there came *flocking into*

his mind an innumerable company of his sins, of which those that gave him most affliction were his deadness, dulness, and coldness in his holy duties ; his wanderings of heart, his weariness in all good things, his want of love to God, &c. ; and then the inquiry suggested itself, "Are these the fruits of Christianity? Are these the tokens of a blessed man?"

Thus for a season did the clouds of despondency again return and darken his spirit. He felt as though he could not live, and yet was not fit to die. But one day, as he was pacing to and fro in his house, "as a man in a most woful state," these words of God "took hold of his heart:"—"Ye are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." At this his fear of death was dispelled by an assurance of the free mercy of God. He says, "O what a *turn* it made upon me! I was as one awakened out of some troublesome sleep and dream. . . . Now was I got on high; I saw myself within the arms of grace and mercy; and though I was before afraid to think of a dying hour, yet now I cried, 'Let me die!' Now was death lovely and beautiful in my sight, for I saw that we shall never live *indeed* till we be gone to the other world. O, methought, this life is but a slumber in comparison with that



above. At this time also I saw more in these words, 'Heirs of God,' (Rom. vii, 17,) than ever I shall be able to express while I live in this world. '*Heirs of God!*' God himself is the portion of the saints. This I saw and wondered at; but cannot *tell* you what I saw."

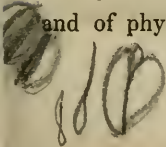
At another time, when he was extremely sick and weak, the tempter again grievously assaulted him, labouring to hide from him his former experience of God's goodness, and setting before him the terrors of death and judgment, insomuch that he "was as one dead before death came," and felt as though he were already descending into the pit. "Methought," he says, "there was no way, but to hell I must!" But while he was in the midst of these fears, the account of Lazarus being carried by angels to Abraham's bosom suddenly darted in upon him, as though it was said to him, "So shall it be when thou dost leave this world." These words of the apostle, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?" also fell with great weight upon his mind. "At this," he says, "I became well, both in my body and mind, at once; for my sickness did presently vanish, and I walked comfortably in my work for God again."

Not long after this he was suddenly visited with another "great cloud of darkness," which

so hid from him the things of God and Christ, that it seemed as though he had never seen or known them in his life. "I was also," he says, "so overrun in my soul with a senseless, heartless frame of spirit, that I could not feel my soul to move or stir after grace and life by Christ; I was as if my loins were broken, or as if my hands and feet had been tied or bound with chains. At this time also I felt some weakness to seize upon my outward man,* which made the other affliction still more heavy and uncomfortable to me.

"After I had been in this condition some three or four days, as I was sitting by the fire, I felt this word to sound in my heart, 'I must go to Jesus.' At this my darkness fled away, and the blessed things of heaven were set in my view." He could not recollect whether the words which had thus revived his spirit were to be found in the Bible; he therefore puts the question to Mrs. Bunyan; and from his appealing to her for information we may safely infer that she, as well as himself, was a diligent reader of the sacred volume. "Wife," said he, "is there ever such a scripture, 'I must go to

* We here see again the close connection there was between Bunyan's visitations of spiritual despondency and of physical weakness.



Jesus ?' " She said she could not tell. The precise *words*, as he quoted them, do not occur ; but the *idea* floating in his mind was drawn from Hebrews xii, 22-24. He had not sat above two or three minutes before the words, " and to an innumerable company of angels," came *bolt-ing in* upon him ; and immediately the whole of that sublime passage " about the Mount Sion " was set before his eyes.

" Then," he says, " with joy I told my wife, ' O ! now I know, I know ! ' ' That night was a good night to me ; I never had but few better. I longed for the company of some of God's people, that I might have imparted unto them what God had shewed me. Christ was a precious Christ to my soul that night. I could scarce lie in my bed for joy, and peace, and triumph, through Christ. This great glory did not continue upon me until morning ; yet the twelfth chapter of Hebrews was a blessed scripture to me for many days together after this.

" The words are these : ' Ye are come to Mount Sion, to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven ; to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to *Jesus*

the Mediator of the New Testament, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.' Through this sentence the Lord led me over and over again; first to this word, and then to that; and shewed me *wonderful glory* in every one of them. These words also have oft since that time been a great refreshment to my spirit."

About five or six years after he was first awakened, and but a few months after he had formally united with the church, Bunyan was earnestly desired by some of the most pious and judicious members thereof to take a more prominent part in their religious exercises, by occasionally speaking a word of exhortation to the people. This, at first, his modesty and a feeling of unfitness for the work induced him to decline; but his brethren being convinced, from his promptness in prayer, his wonderful acquaintance with Scripture, and his readiness of utterance, that he possessed gifts which might and ought to be used for the edification of the church, continued their entreaties, until at length, though with much diffidence, he consented to their request, "and did twice," he tells us, "at two several assemblies, (but in private,) discover his gift among them; at which they not only seemed to be, but did solemnly

protest, as in the sight of the great God, they were both affected and comforted; and gave thanks to the Father of mercies for the grace bestowed on him."

After this some of his brethren, who were in the habit of going into the neighbouring villages to teach, occasionally induced him to accompany them, when he "would sometimes speak a word of admonition" to the societies at their private meetings. At length, being encouraged thereto by a sense of duty, by the approbation of those who had heard him, and by the continued desires of the church, he was, after solemn prayer and fasting, "more particularly called forth and appointed to a more ordinary and public preaching of the word."

At the same time with Bunyan, seven others of the congregation were solemnly set apart to the same work, which appears to have been similar to that of a "local preacher" among the early Methodists; for we find that Bunyan continued in the exercise of his vocation as a tinker for some years after this. His ministerial work was doubtless what Southey terms it, "a roving commission to itinerate in the villages round about;" and this work occupied so much of his time, that when in the ensuing year (1657) he was nominated a deacon, the church declined

electing him to that office, on the ground that he was too much engaged to attend to it.*

Bunyan entered upon his ministerial labours with fear and trembling, and a deep sense of his unworthiness; for he was at that time, he tells us, sorely afflicted with doubts concerning his spiritual state. The issue, however, proved, that his brethren who had first encouraged him to the work had not judged wrongly in supposing that he was calculated for public and eminent usefulness. No sooner was it rumoured abroad that Bunyan, the profane tinker, had turned preacher, than the people flocked by hundreds, from all parts round about, to hear him. They were drawn together by various motives, chiefly perhaps by curiosity; but one feeling only moved the heart of the preacher, and that was an earnest, longing desire to "find out such a word as might, if God would bless it, lay hold of, and awaken the conscience" of those who heard him. In this desire he was not disappointed, for he had not preached long before some of his hearers "began to be touched, and greatly afflicted in their minds," under a conviction of their sinfulness and their need of a Saviour.

* About this time Gifford died, and was succeeded in the pastorship by a preacher named John Burton.

“But at first,” says Bunyan, “I could not believe that God should speak by me to the heart of any man, still counting myself unworthy: yet those who were thus *touched* would love me, and have a particular respect for me; and though I did put it from me that they should be awakened by me, still they would confess it, and affirm it before the saints of God. . . Wherefore seeing them in both their words and deeds to be so constant, and also in their hearts so earnestly pressing after the knowledge of Jesus Christ, rejoicing that ever God did send me where they were; then I began to conclude it might be so, that God had owned in his work such a foolish one as I; and then came that word of God to my heart with much sweet refreshment, ‘The blessing of them that were ready to perish is come upon me; yea, I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy,’ Job xxix, 13.

“At this, therefore, I rejoiced; yea, the tears of those whom God did awaken by my preaching would be both solace and encouragement to me. I thought on these sayings, ‘Who is he that maketh me glad, but the same that is made sorry by me?’ 2 Cor. ii, 2: and again, ‘Though I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am unto you: for the seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord,’ 1 Cor. ix, 2. These things therefore

were as another argument unto me that God had called me to, and stood by me in this work."

One instance of his usefulness is too remarkable to be omitted. He was to preach in a country village in Cambridgeshire; and the people being gathered together in the churchyard, a Cambridge scholar, and none of the soberest of them either, passing that way, inquired what that concourse of people was, it being on a week day; and being told that one Bunyan, a tinker, was to preach there, he gave a boy two pence to hold his horse, saying, he was resolved "to hear the tinker prate;" and so he went into the church and heard him.* But God met him there by his word, so that he came out much changed, and for a long time he desired to hear no preacher but the "tinker." He became a sincere convert, and was afterward himself an eminent minister of the gospel in that county.

The character of Bunyan's preaching took its colouring, in a great measure, from his own personal hopes and fears. At first his discourses

* During the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell the parish churches were open to evangelical ministers of all denominations, and Bunyan sometimes preached in them; but notwithstanding his success and popularity as a preacher, he never applied for an appointment to any living.

were chiefly awakening and alarming ; setting forth the curse of God that was upon men, because of sin. “ This part of my work,” he says, “ I fulfilled with great sense, [feeling,] for the terrors of the law, and the guilt of my transgressions, lay heavy upon my conscience. I preached what I felt—what I smartingly did feel—even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment. Indeed, I have been as one sent to them from the dead. I went myself in chains, to preach to them in chains ; and carried that fire in my own conscience that I persuaded them to be aware of. I can truly say, and that without dissembling, that when I have been to preach, I have gone full of guilt and terror even to the pulpit door, and there it hath been taken off, and I have been at liberty in my mind until I have done my work ; and then immediately, even before I could get down the pulpit stairs, I have been as bad as I was before : yet God carried me on, but surely with a strong hand, for neither guilt nor hell could take me off my work.”

In this strain he continued to preach, “ crying out against men’s sins, and their fearful state because of them,” for the space of two years, when he happily attained a more joyful state of mind, the Lord giving him many sweet disco-

veries of his grace through Christ. "Wherefore now," he says, "I altered in my preaching, (for still I preached what I saw and felt;) now therefore I did much labour to hold forth Jesus Christ in all his offices, relations, and benefits to the world, and did strive also to discover, condemn, and remove those false supports and props on which the world doth lean, and by them fall and perish. On these things also I stayed as long as on the other."

But whatever the aspect in which he presented the truths of religion to his hearers, he was all the time drawn out in earnest prayer to God "that he would make the word effectual to the salvation of the soul." Frequently, when he had concluded the exercises, it *went to his heart* to think that the word had fallen "as rain in stony places;" and he tells us that he often said in his heart, before the Lord, "that if to be hanged up presently before their eyes would be a means to awaken them, and confirm them in the truth, I gladly should be contented."

He was never satisfied unless he saw some good effected by his preaching. "If I were fruitless," he says, "it mattered not who commended; but if I were fruitful, I cared not who did condemn."

So greatly did he rejoice over his spiritual

children, that he reckoned himself as possessing great treasures in every place where he had been instrumental in the conversion of souls. On this subject the following passages, with others of a like nature, were very refreshing to him :—"He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way doth save a soul from death," James v, 20. "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life ; and he that winneth souls is wise," Prov. xi, 30. "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever," Dan. xii, 3. "For what is our hope, our joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." 1 Thess. ii, 19, 20. On the other hand, he tells us, that when any of those who had been awakened by his ministry fell back, it grieved him as much as if one of his own children had gone to the grave. Nothing, except the fear of losing his own soul, went so *near* to him as that.

In the exercise of his ministry his practice was to get into the "darkest" places in the neighbourhood ; "not," he says, "because he could not endure the light, but because he found his spirit lean most after awakening and converting work." Like St. Paul, too, he preferred "to preach the gospel where Christ was not

named," lest he should "build upon another man's foundation," Rom. xv, 20.

As regards the subjects on which he discoursed, he remarks that while he "contended with great earnestness for the word of faith, and the remission of sins by the death and sufferings of Jesus," he never cared to meddle with those things respecting which there was a difference of opinion among Christians ; especially such as were of small moment ; because he found that they engendered strife, while neither the doing nor the neglecting of them was any mark of a person's being a child of God.

In his preaching, he tells us, he not unfrequently found "a word cast in *by the by*" to produce more good than all the rest of the sermon. Sometimes, too, when he thought he had done no good, then he had done most of all ; and at other times, when he "thought he should have caught them," he found he had "fished for nothing."

In performing the duties of his ministry he was often sorely afflicted with temptations of various kinds. "Sometimes," he says, "I should be assaulted with great discouragement therein, fearing I should not be able to speak a word at all to edification ; nay, that I should not be able to speak sense unto the people ; at which times

I should have such a strange faintness and strengthlessness seize upon my body, that my legs have been scarce able to carry me to the place of exercise. Sometimes, again, when I have been preaching, I have been violently assaulted with thoughts of blasphemy, and strongly tempted to speak the words with my mouth before the congregation. I have also at sometimes, even when I have begun with much liberty of speech, yet been, before the end of that opportunity, so straightened as to utterance before the people, that I have been as if I had not known or remembered what I have been about; or *as if my head had been in a bag* all the time of my exercise.

“Again, sometimes, as I have been about to preach upon some smart and searching portion of the word, I have found the tempter suggest, ‘What! will you preach *this*? this condemns yourself; wherefore preach not of this at all; or if you do, yet so *mince* it, as to make way for your own escape.’ . . . But I thank the Lord, I have been kept from consenting to these horrid suggestions, and have rather, as Samson, bowed myself with all my might, to condemn sin wherever I found it; yea, though therein also I did bring guilt upon my own conscience. ‘Let me die,’ thought I, ‘with the Philistines,’

rather than deal corruptly with the blessed word of God. Judges xvi, 20, 30.

“I have also, while found in this blessed work of Christ, been often tempted to pride and liftings up of heart :* and though I dare not say I have not been affected with this, yet truly the Lord, of his precious mercy, hath so carried it toward me, that for the most part I have had but small joy to give way to such a thing ; for it hath been my every day’s portion to be let into the evil of my own heart, and still made to see such a multitude of corruptions and infirmities therein, that it hath caused hanging down of the head, under all my gifts and attainments.

“I have also (at such times) had some notable place or other of the word presented before me, which contained some sharp and piercing sentence concerning the perishing of the soul, notwithstanding gifts and parts ; as for instance, this hath been of great use to me : ‘Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,

* The following anecdote occurs in one of Toplady’s works :—Mr. John Bunyan having preached one day with peculiar warmth and enlargement, some of his friends, after service was over, took him by the hand, and could not help observing what a sweet sermon he had delivered. “Ay,” said the good man, “you need not remind me of that, for the devil told me of it before I was out of the pulpit.”

and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing,' 1 Cor. iii, 1, 2."

From all accounts it appears that Bunyan was not only a zealous and devoted preacher,—that was to be expected from his piety and the native warmth of his character,—but also a highly acceptable and successful one. Nor is this to be wondered at. Though in the common acceptance of the word an unlearned, he was by no means an ignorant man, for he was evidently a shrewd observer of both men and things; and if his reading was hitherto chiefly confined to the Bible, it must be remembered that he studied *that* with such an extraordinary intensity of interest, that few, even in that age, were more "mighty in the Scriptures." He possessed, too, all the requisites of natural oratory,—deep feeling, a vivid imagination, strong sense, and a ready utterance: above all, his hearers felt that he was *in earnest*, and had their interest deeply at heart. Such a preacher could not fail to produce a prodigious effect upon his auditory. "His powerful and piercing words," observes one of his cotemporaries,

“brought tears into the eyes, and melted the hearts” of his hearers.*

The same writer adds, “By this time his family was increased, and as that increased God increased his stores, so that he lived now in great credit among his neighbours, who were amazed to find such a wonderful reformation in him; that from a person so vile as he had been should spring up so good a Christian: and people who had heard his circumstances came many miles to hear him, and were highly satisfied; so that, telling their neighbours, more crowded after him, insomuch that the place was many times too strait for them; for although he often confessed he had fears upon him, and doubts, and sometimes tremblings, inward evil suggestions, and temptations, before he stood up to speak, yet he no sooner began to utter the word of God than they all vanished; he grew warm with a fervent zeal, and nothing obstructed his delivery.”—*Old Memoir*.

* Burton, (the successor of Gifford,) then pastor of the church, said of Bunyan, “He hath through grace taken three *heavenly degrees*, namely: union with Christ,—the anointing of the Spirit,—and experience of temptation; which do more fit a man for the weighty work of preaching the gospel, than all the university learning and degrees that can be had.”

Bunyan was not, however, allowed to exercise his ministry without opposition. "When I first began to preach," he says, "the doctors and priests of the country did *open wide* against me: but I was persuaded of this,—not to render railing for railing; but to see how many of their carnal professors I could convince of their miserable state by the law, and of the want and worth of Christ." In 1657 (the year after he commenced preaching) an indictment was preferred against him, as appears from the following entry in the church book still preserved at Bedford:—"On the 25th December, 1657, the church resolved to set apart a day for seeking counsel of God, what to do with respect to the indictment against brother Bunyan at the assizes, for preaching at Eaton."* The action was probably dropped, as we hear no more about it, and Bunyan was present at the church meetings in February and July of 1638.

* Some surprise may be felt that such a persecution should have been set on foot under the government of Cromwell; but Dr. Southey remarks, with truth, that "there was much more persecution during the protectorate than Cromwell would have allowed if he could have prevented it." The lawfulness of public preaching by men not ordained was, indeed, at that time a point warmly debated, the Presbyterians in general maintaining the negative with as lofty pretensions to divine right

The malignity of his enemies appears to have increased in proportion to the popularity and success of his preaching; and the vilest slanders were, by ignorant and malicious persons, “whirled up and down the country” against him. It was rumoured that he was a witch, a Jesuit, a highwayman, and even a libertine; charges which he repelled with just and virtuous indignation. “These slanders,” he says, “I glory in, because *but* slanders and falsehoods cast upon me by the devil and his seed; and should I not be dealt with thus wickedly by the world, I should want one sign of a saint, and a child of God. ‘Blessed are ye,’ said the Lord Jesus, ‘when men shall revile and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.’ Matt. v, 11, 12.

“These things, therefore, upon mine own account, troubled me not. No, though they were twenty times more than they are, I have

as had been asserted by the champions of prelacy; so as to draw forth Milton’s biting sarcasm,—

“New presbyter is but old priest writ large.”

It is probable, however, that personal enmity occasioned this attempt to check Bunyan’s usefulness.—*Conder*.

a good conscience ; and whereas they speak evil of me, as of an evil doer, they shall be ashamed that falsely accuse my good conversation in Christ.

“ So then what shall I say to those who have thus bespattered me ? Shall I threaten them ? Shall I chide them ? Shall I flatter them ? Shall I entreat them to hold their tongues ? No, not I. Were it not for that these things make them ripe for damnation that are the authors and abettors, I would say unto them, Report it, because it will increase my glory.

“ Therefore I bind these lies and slanders to me as an ornament ; it belongs to my Christian profession to be vilified, slandered, reproached, and reviled ; and since all this is nothing else, as my God and my conscience do bear me witness, I rejoice in reproaches for Christ’s sake.

“ But as for mine accusers, let them provide themselves to meet me before the tribunal of the Son of God, there to answer for all these things, with all the rest of their iniquities, unless God shall give them repentance for them, for the which I pray with all my heart.”

CHAPTER VII.

BUNYAN'S FIRST PUBLICATION : CONTROVERSY
WITH THE QUAKERS.

SHORTLY after he began to preach, Bunyan felt himself called to take up his pen in defence of the doctrines of the gospel, against the heresies then propagated by the people called Quakers. These Quakers, who were then a new sect, having originated during the commotion of the civil wars, were a very different people from their successors of the present day. No body of professors were more full of fanaticism, or more eager to attack those who differed from them. Baxter, who frequently came in contact with them, thus describes their tenets and conduct :—"They were but the Ranters, turned from horrid profaneness and blasphemy to a life of extreme austerity on the other side. Their doctrines were mostly the same with the Ranters ; they made the light which every man had within him to be his sufficient rule ; and consequently the Scriptures and ministry were set light by. They spake much for the dwelling and working of the Spirit in us, but little of justification, and the pardon of sin, and our re-

conciliation with God through Jesus Christ. They pretend their dependance on the Spirit's conduct, against set times of prayer, and against sacraments, and against their due esteem of Scripture and ministry. They will not have the Scriptures called the word of God; their principal zeal lieth in railing at the ministers as hirelings, deceivers, false prophets, &c.; and in refusing to swear before a magistrate, or to put off their hat to any, &c. At first they did use to fall into tremblings, and sometimes vomitings, in their meetings, and pretended to be violently acted on by the Spirit; but now that is ceased. They only meet, and he that pretendeth to be moved by the Spirit speaketh; and sometimes they say nothing, but sit an hour or more in silence, and then depart. One while divers of them went naked through the several chief towns and cities of the land, as a prophetic act: some of them have famished and drowned themselves in melancholy; and others have undertaken, by the power of the Spirit, to raise the dead. They have oft come into the congregation, when I had liberty to preach Christ's gospel, and cried out against me as a deceiver of the people. They have followed me home, crying out in the streets, 'The day of the Lord is coming, when thou shalt perish as a deceiver.'"

Such were the men against whose erroneous teachings Bunyan felt it his duty to warn the people, which he did in a pamphlet, entitled, "Some Gospel Truths opened according to the Scriptures : or the Divine and Human Nature in Christ Jesus ; his coming into the World ; his Righteousness, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession, and second coming to Judgment, plainly demonstrated and proved." This work, which was Bunyan's first literary performance, appeared in 1656, the year in which he began to preach, with a commendatory preface by Burton.

"An ill judgment," observes Dr. Southey, "might be formed of this treatise, from that part of the title which promises 'profitable directions to stand fast in the doctrine of Jesus, the son of Mary, against those blustering storms of the devil's temptations, which do at this day, like so many scorpions, break loose from the bottomless pit, to bite and torment those that have not tasted the virtue of Jesus, by the revelation of the Spirit of God.' Little wisdom and less moderation might be expected in a polemical discourse so introduced. It is, however, a calm, well-arranged, and well-supported statement of the Scriptural doctrines on some momentous points which the primitive Quakers

were understood by others to deny; and which, in fact, (though they did not so understand themselves,) they frequently did deny, both virtually and explicitly, when in the heat and acerbity of oral disputation they said, they knew not what; and also, when, under the same belief of immediate inspiration, they committed to writing whatever words came uppermost, as fast as the pen could put them down, and subjected to no after revision what had been produced with no forethought."

This is strong commendation; but Mr. Philip goes still further; he says, "It sweeps the whole circle of the Messiahship of Jesus, and that with a strict logic and in a pure taste. I can never read it without thinking of Dr. Smith's 'Scripture Testimony.' It has all the convincing power of that masterly work, although it acquires that power from common sense alone. . . . For ordinary readers it is perhaps the best thing against Socinianism they could read. In this point of view it deserves to be republished and circulated among the poor; for its bearings against old Quakerism are its least merit."

In this treatise, observes the same writer, Bunyan does not name "any minister or book of the Quakers; with the exception of seven questions to them, at the end of it, he does not

even plead with them, but with those who ‘listened to them.’” His knowledge of their doctrine he probably derived from their own lips; for it appears he had often heard them, and had also, like Baxter, been sometimes interrupted and reviled by them while he was preaching.

To Bunyan’s treatise, Edward Burroughs, a noted man among the Quakers in those days, published a reply under the following title, “The True Faith of the Gospel of Peace contended for in a Spirit of Meekness; and the Mystery of Salvation (Christ within, the Hope of Glory) vindicated in the Spirit of Love, against the Secret Opposition of John Bunyan, a professed Minister in Bedfordshire.” These mild and loving words, however, served but to introduce a most virulent and abusive tirade, of the spirit of which the following passages may be taken as a specimen:—“The Lord rebuke thee, thou unclean spirit, who hast falsely accused the innocent to clear thyself from guilt; but at thy door guilt lodges, and I leave it with thee; clear thyself, if thou art able. And thy wicked reproaches we patiently bear, till the Lord appear for us: and we are not greater than our Lord, who was said to have a devil, by thy generation; and their measure of wickedness thou fulfils, and art one of the dragon’s

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army against the Lamb and his followers ; and thy weapons are slanders, and thy refuge is lies ; and thy work is confused, and hath hardly gained a name in Babylon's record. . . . If we should diligently search, we should find thee, through feigned words, through covetousness, making merchandise of souls, loving the wages of unrighteousness : and such were the scoffers whom Peter speaks of, among whom thou art found in thy practice, among them who are preaching for hire, and love the error of Balaam, who took gifts and rewards."

To Burroughs' pamphlet Bunyan published an answer, vindicating his former treatise, and maintaining that the Quakers held substantially the same opinions that the Ranters had formerly done, "only that the Ranters had made them threadbare at an alehouse, and the Quakers had set a new gloss upon them again by an outward legal holiness or righteousness." To the charge of preaching for hire, and making merchandise of souls, he replied thus :—"Friend, dost thou speak this as from thy own knowledge, or did any other tell thee so ? However, that spirit that led thee out of this way is a lying spirit ; for though I be poor and of no repute in the world, as to outward things, yet this grace I have learned, by the example of the apostle, to

After he had lain in prison five or six days, some of his friends made another effort to procure his enlargement, by giving bonds for his appearance at the sessions; for his mittimus stated that he was to lie in jail till he could find sureties; but the magistrate to whom they applied, though at first he had promised to take bail, afterward refused to do so. "At this," says Bunyan, "I was not at all daunted, but rather glad, and saw evidently that the Lord had heard me; for before I went down to the justice, I begged of God, that if I might do more good by being at liberty than in prison, then I might be set at liberty; but if not, his will be done; for I was not altogether without hope but that my imprisonment might be an awakening to the saints in the country; therefore I could not tell well which to choose; only I in that manner did commit the thing to God. And verily, at my return, I did meet my God sweetly in the prison again, comforting of me, and satisfying of me that it was his will and mind that I should be there."

At the quarter sessions for the county, which were held at Bedford in January, 1661, near two months after his commitment, Bunyan was brought up and examined before five justices—Keeling, Chester, Blundale, Beecher, and

Snagge. The substance of the examination we give from Bunyan's own account.

The bill of indictment preferred against him ran to this effect :—" That John Bunyan, of the town of Bedford, labourer, being a person of such and such conditions, hath (since such a time) devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear divine service, and is a common upholder of unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord the king," &c.

" After this was read," says Bunyan, " the clerk of the sessions said unto me, ' What say you to this ? ' I said, that as to the first part of it, I was a common frequenter of the church of God ; and was also, by grace, a member of the people over whom Christ is the head.

" ' But,' said Justice Keeling, who was the judge in that court, ' do you come to church ;— you know what I mean, to the parish church,— to hear divine service ? ' I answered, No, I did not. He asked me why. I said, Because I did not find it in the word of God. He said we were commanded to pray. I said, ' But not by the Common Prayer-book.' He said, ' How then ? ' I said, ' With the spirit ; as the apostle saith, " I will pray with the spirit, and with the un-

derstanding.”’ He said, we might pray with the spirit, and with the understanding, and with the Common Prayer-book also. I said, that the prayers in the Common Prayer-book were such as were made by other men, and not by the motions of the Holy Ghost in our hearts; and the apostle saith, he will pray with the spirit and with the understanding; not with the spirit and the Common Prayer-book.

“One of the justices said, ‘What do *you* count prayer? Do you think it is to say a few words over, before or among a people?’ I said, ‘No, not so; for men might have many elegant or excellent words, and yet not pray at all: but when a man *prayeth*, he doth, through a sense of those things which he wants, (which sense is begotten by the Spirit,) pour out his heart before God, through Christ: though his words be not so many, and so excellent as others are.’ They said, that was true. I said, this might be done without the Common Prayer-book.

“One of them said, ‘How should we know that you do not write out your prayers first, and then read them afterward to the people?’ This he spake in a laughing way. I said, ‘It is not our use to take a pen and paper, and write a few words thereon, and then go and read it over to a company of people.’

“ ‘ But,’ said Justice Keeling, ‘ it is lawful to use the Common Prayer, and such like forms ; for Christ taught his disciples to pray, as John also taught his disciples.’ And further, said he, ‘ Cannot one man teach another to pray ? “ Faith comes by hearing ;” and one man may convince another of sin ; and therefore prayers made by men, and read over, are good to teach, and help men to pray.’

“ While he was speaking these words, God brought that word in Rom. viii, 26, into my mind : I say God brought it, for I thought not on it before ; but as he was speaking it came so fresh into my mind, and was set so evidently before me, as if the scripture had said, ‘ Take me, take me ;’ so when he had done speaking I said, ‘ Sir, the Scripture saith, that “ it is the Spirit that helpeth our infirmities ; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought ; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Mark,’ said I, ‘ it doth not say that the Common Prayer-book teacheth us how to pray, but the Spirit ; . . . and though one man may tell another *how* he should pray ; yet, as I said before, he cannot pray, nor make his condition known to God, except the Spirit help. It is not the Common Prayer-book that can do this. It is the Spirit that sheweth

us our sins, and the Spirit that sheweth us a Saviour; and the Spirit that stirreth up in our hearts desires to come to God for such things as we stand in need of, even sighing out our souls to him for them, with groans which cannot be uttered.'” At this, and other remarks to the same effect, he tells us the justices were “*set.*”

Keeling then asked him what objections he had to the Common Prayer-book? He gave his reasons for not using it; adding, “But yet, notwithstanding, they that have a mind to use it, they have their liberty; that is, I would not keep them from it; but for our parts, we can pray to God without it, blessed be his name.”

“With that one of them said, ‘Who is your God, Beelzebub?’ Moreover, they often said that I was possessed with the spirit of delusion, and of the devil: all which sayings I passed over. The Lord forgive them! And further, I said, ‘Blessed be the Lord for it, we are encouraged to meet together, and to pray and exhort one another; for we have the comfortable presence of God among us; for ever blessed be his holy name.’

“Justice Keeling then called this ‘pedlar’s French;’ saying that I must leave off my ‘canting.’ The Lord open his eyes!

“ I said that we ought to ‘ exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day,’ &c. Justice Keeling said, that I ought not to preach ; and asked me where I had my authority ; with other such like words. I said, that I would prove that it was lawful for me, and for such as I am, to preach the word of God. He said unto me, ‘ By what scripture?’ I said, by that in 1 Pet. iv, 11 ; and Acts xviii ; with others, which he would not suffer me to mention ; but said, ‘ Hold, not so many ; which is the first?’

“ I said, ‘ This : “ As every man hath received the gift, even so let him minister the same unto another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God,” &c.’

“ He said, ‘ Let me a little open that scripture to you : “ As every man hath received the gift,” that is,’ said he, ‘ as every man hath received a *trade*, so let him follow it. If any man hath received a gift of *tinkering*, as thou hast done, let him follow his tinkering. And so other men their trades ; and the divine his calling, &c.’

“ ‘ Nay, sir,’ said I, ‘ but it is most clear that the apostle speaks here of preaching the word. If you do but compare both the verses together, the next verse explains this gift, what it is, say-

ing, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God:" so then it is plain that the Holy Ghost doth not so much in this place exhort to civil callings, as to the exercise of those gifts that we have received from God.' I would have gone on, but he would not give me leave.

"He said, we might do it in our families, but not otherways. I said, if it were lawful to do good to some, it was lawful to do good to more. If it were a good duty to exhort our families, it was good to exhort others; but if they held it a sin to meet together to seek the grace of God, and exhort one another to follow Christ, I should sin still; for so we should do.

"He said he was not so well versed in Scripture as to dispute, or words to that purpose; and, moreover, that they could not wait upon me any longer; but said to me, 'Then you confess the indictment, do you not?' Now, and not till now, I saw that I was indicted. I said, 'This I confess, we have had many meetings together, both to pray to God, and to exhort one another; and that we had the sweet, comforting presence of the Lord among us for our encouragement, blessed be his name; therefore, I confess myself guilty, and no otherwise.'

"'Then,' said he, 'hear your judgment. You must be had back again to prison, and there lie

for three months following ; and at three months' end, if you do not submit to go to church to hear divine service, and leave your preaching, you must be banished the realm : and if, after such a day as shall be appointed you to be gone, you shall be found in this realm, or be found to come over again without special license from the king, you must stretch for it ; I tell you plainly.' And so he bid my jailer have me away.

"I told him, as to this matter I was *at a point* with him ; for if I were out of prison to-day, I would preach the gospel again to-morrow, by the help of God. To which some one made answer, but my jailer pulling me away to be gone, I could not tell what he said.

"Thus I departed from them ; and I can truly say, I bless the Lord Jesus Christ for it, that my heart was sweetly refreshed in the time of my examination, and also afterward, at my returning to the prison ; so that I found Christ's words more than bare trifles, where he saith, 'I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist,' Luke xxi, 15."

The admissions made by Bunyan in this examination being thus taken for a confession of the indictment, he was remanded to prison, where, on the third of April, he was visited

by Mr. Cobb, the clerk of the peace, who, as he said, was sent by the justices to admonish him, and demand his submission to the Church of England. Bunyan has recorded the substance of the discourse that was held between them, and from his account we give the following:—

“When he was come into the house he sent for me out of my chamber; and when I was come to him, he said, ‘Neighbour Bunyan, how do you do?’ ‘I thank you, sir,’ I said, ‘very well, blessed be the Lord.’

“Saith he, ‘I come to tell you, that it is desired you would submit to the laws of the land, or else at the next sessions it will go worse with you, even to be sent away out of the nation; or else worse than that.’

“I said, ‘Sir, I conceive that the law by which I am in prison at this time doth not condemn me or the meetings that I frequent. That law was made against those, that being designed to do evil in their meetings, making the exercise of religion their pretence to cover their wickedness. It doth not forbid the private meetings of those that plainly and simply make it their only end to worship the Lord, and exhort one another to edification. My end in meeting with others is simply to do as much good as I can, by exhortation and counsel, ac-

ording to that small measure of light which God hath given me ; and not to disturb the peace of the nation.'

" 'Every one will say the same,' said he ; 'you see the late insurrection in London, under what glorious pretences they went ; and yet indeed they intended no less than the ruin of the kingdom and commonwealth.'*

" 'That practice of theirs I abhor,' said I ; 'yet it doth not follow that because they did so,

* The insurrection alluded to is that headed by one Thomas Venner, a cooper, who held forth at a small meeting house in the city. This man had excited a few enthusiasts, like himself, with the expectation of a "fifth monarchy," under the personal reign of King Jesus, and that the saints were to take the kingdom to themselves. To introduce this imaginary kingdom, they marched out of their meeting house on Sunday, January 6, 1661, to the number of about fifty men, well armed, with a resolution to subvert the present government, or die in the attempt. At first they successfully resisted several companies sent against them, defending themselves with desperate resolution ; but on Wednesday, after Venner, their leader, had been knocked down, and about half their number killed, they were compelled to surrender. This mad insurrection was greedily laid hold of by the court as a plea for the adoption of severe measures against the dissenters ; and a proclamation was immediately issued, forbidding Baptists, Quakers, and Fifth-Monarchy men, to hold meetings for public worship.

therefore all others will do so. I look upon it as my duty to behave myself under the king's government both as becomes a man and a Christian; and if an occasion were offered me, I should willingly manifest my loyalty to my prince, both by word and deed.'

" 'Well' said he, 'I do not profess myself to be a man that can dispute; but this I say truly, neighbour Bunyan, I would have you consider this matter seriously, and submit yourself. You may have your liberty to exhort your neighbour in private discourse, so be you do not call together an assembly of people; and truly you may do much good to the church of Christ, if you would go this way; and this you may do, and the law not abridge you of it. It is your private *meetings* that the law is against.'

" 'Sir,' said I, 'if I may do good to one by my discourse, why may I not do good to two? and if to two, why not to four, and so to eight? &c.'

" 'Ay,' saith he, 'and to a hundred, I warrant you.'

" 'Yes, sir,' said I, 'I think I should not be forbid to do as much good as I can.'

" 'But,' said he, 'you may but pretend to do good, and instead, notwithstanding, do harm, by seducing the people. You are therefore denied

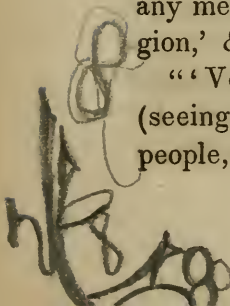
your meeting so many together, lest you should do harm.'

" 'And yet,' said I, 'you say the law tolerates me to discourse with my neighbour; surely there is no law tolerates me to seduce any one; therefore if I may by the law discourse with one, surely it is to do him good; and if I by discoursing may do good to one, surely, by the same law, I may do good to many.'

" 'The law,' saith he, 'doth expressly forbid your private meetings; therefore they are not to be tolerated.'

"I told him that I would not entertain so much uncharitableness of that parliament in the 35th of Elizabeth, or of the queen herself, as to think they did by that law intend the oppressing of any of God's ordinances, or the interrupting any in the way of God. Men may, in the wrestling of it, turn it against the way of God; but take the law in itself, and it only fighteth against those that drive at mischief in their meetings, making religion only their cloak or pretence; for so are the words of the statute:—'If any meetings under colour or pretence of religion,' &c.

" 'Very good,' he replied, 'therefore the king (seeing that pretences are usually in and among people, so as to make religion their pretence



only) doth forbid such private meetings, and tolerates only public. You may meet in public.'

" 'Sir,' said I, 'let me answer you in a similitude: set the case that at such a wood corner there did usually come forth thieves to do mischief; must there therefore be a law made that every one that cometh out there shall be killed? May there not come out from thence true men, as well as thieves? Just thus it is in this case: I do think there may be many that design the destruction of the commonwealth; but it doth not follow therefore that all private meetings are unlawful. Those that transgress, let them be punished; and if at any time I myself should do any act in my conversation as doth not become a man and a Christian, let me bear the punishment. And as for your saying I may meet in public, if I may be suffered I would gladly do it. I do not meet in private because I am afraid to have meetings in public. I bless the Lord that my heart is at that point, that if any man can lay anything to my charge, either in doctrine or in practice, in this particular, that can be proved error or heresy, I am willing to disown it, even in the very market-place. But if it be truth, then to stand to it to the last drop of my blood.'

" 'But, good-man Bunyan,' said he, 'me-

thinks you need not stand so strictly upon this one thing, as to have meetings of such public assemblies. Cannot you submit, and notwithstanding do as much good as you can, in a neighbourly way, without having such meetings?’

“ ‘Truly, sir,’ said I, ‘I do not desire to commend myself, but to think meanly of myself; . . yet when I see that the Lord, through grace, hath in some measure blessed my labour, I dare not but exercise that gift which God hath given me, for the good of the people.’ And I said further, that ‘I would willingly speak in public if I might.’

“He said, ‘You may come to the public assemblies and hear. What though you do not preach? you may hear. Do not think yourself so well enlightened, and that you have received a gift so far above others, but that you may hear other men preach.’

“I told him, I was as willing to be taught as to give instruction, and I looked upon it as my duty to do both; for (said I) a man that is a teacher, he himself may learn also from another that teacheth; as the apostle saith, ‘We may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn,’ 1 Cor. xiv, 31.

“ ‘But,’ said he, ‘what if you should forbear

awhile, and sit still, till you see further how things will go ?

“ ‘ Sir,’ said I, ‘ Wickliffe saith, that he which leaveth off preaching and hearing the word of God for fear of excommunication of men, is already excommunicated of God, and shall in the day of judgment be counted a traitor to Christ.’

“ ‘ Ay,’ saith he, ‘ they that do not *hear* shall be so counted indeed ; do you therefore hear.’

“ ‘ But, sir,’ said I, ‘ he saith, he that shall leave off either *preaching* or hearing, &c. That is, if he hath received a gift for edification, it is his sin if he doth not lay it out in a way of exhortation and counsel, according to the proportion of his gift.’

“ ‘ But,’ said he, ‘ how shall we know that *you* have received a gift ?’

“ Said I, ‘ Let any man hear and search, and prove the doctrine by the Bible.’

“ ‘ But will you be willing,’ said he, ‘ that two indifferent persons should determine the case, and will you stand by their judgment ?’

“ I said, ‘ Are they infallible ?’

“ He said, ‘ No.’

“ ‘ Then,’ said I, ‘ it is possible my judgment may be as good as theirs. But yet I will pass by either, and in this matter be judged by Scripture : I am sure that is infallible, and cannot err.’

“ ‘But,’ said he, ‘who shall be judge between you? for you take the Scriptures one way, and they another.’

“ ‘I said, ‘The Scripture should; and that by comparing one scripture with another; for that will open itself, if it be rightly compared.’

“ ‘But are you willing,’ said he, ‘to stand to the judgment of the Church?’

“ ‘Yes, sir,’ said I, ‘to the approbation of the church of God; (the church’s judgment is best expressed in Scripture.)’

“ ‘Well, neighbour Bunyan,’ said he, ‘but indeed I wish you seriously to consider of these things, between this and the quarter sessions, and to submit yourself. You may do much good if you still continue in the land; but alas! what benefit will it be to your friends, or what good can you do to them, if you should be sent away beyond the seas into Spain, or Constantinople, or some other remote part of the world? Pray be ruled.’

“ ‘Indeed, sir,’ said the jailer, ‘I hope he will be ruled.’

“ ‘I shall desire,’ said I, ‘in all godliness and honesty to behave myself in the nation whilst I am in it; and if I must be so dealt withal, as you say, I hope God will help me to bear what they shall lay upon me. I know no evil that I

have done in this matter, to be so used. I speak *as in the presence of God.*'

" 'You know,' said he, 'that the Scripture saith, "The powers that be are ordained of God."' "

"I said, 'Yes, and that I am to submit "to the king as supreme, and also to the governors, as to them who are sent by him."' "

" 'Well, then,' said he, 'the king commands that you should not have any private meetings, because it is against his law, and he is ordained of God, therefore you should not have any.'

"I told him, 'Paul did own the powers that were in his day to be of God; and yet he was often in prison under them, for all that. And also, though Jesus Christ told Pilate that he had no power against him, but of God, yet he died under the same Pilate. And yet,' said I, 'I hope you will not say that either Paul or Christ were such as did deny magistracy, and so sinned against God in slighting the ordinance. Sir,' said I, 'the law hath provided two ways of obeying; the one to do that which I in my conscience do believe that I am bound to do, *actively*; and when I cannot obey actively, then I am willing to lie down and *suffer* what they shall do unto me.' At this he sat still and said no more; which when he had done, I did thank

him for his civil and meek discoursing with me; and so we parted. O that we might meet in heaven!"

It would appear that the guileless simplicity of Bunyan could see nothing in Cobb's visit but a benevolent effort to persuade him not to provoke the severity of the law, but to desist from preaching, at least for a time, or until some favourable change in affairs should take place; but the fact that he was sent on his errand by the very persons who had procured the preacher's arrest and imprisonment, and the decided hostility which he afterward manifested to Bunyan, are, we think, sufficient proofs that he was actuated on this occasion by no kindly feelings toward the prisoner.

But the question may be asked, whether Bunyan, circumstanced as he was, might not, without any sacrifice of principle, have complied with the terms proposed as the condition of his release; namely, to desist from preaching? If he had done so, he might still, as Cobb urged, have done "much good in a neighbourly way," whereas his continuance in prison seemed effectually to cut him off, not only from the public ministration of the word, but also from every other mode of advancing the cause of religion, besides depriving him of the means of

supporting his family. To a timid, irresolute spirit, this reasoning would have been sufficiently conclusive. Such a spirit, however, was not John Bunyan's. He was persuaded that, "a dispensation of the gospel" having been "committed" unto him, a "wo" rested upon him if, under any circumstances, he *consented* to withhold his message; and he would have laid down life rather than have complied with such an unrighteous requirement. If, however, his persecutors should restrain him by *force*, the sin would lie at their door, not at his. He was doubtless not a little confirmed in his determination by the sentiment of Wickliffe, (which he quoted to Cobb,) that he who left off preaching through fear of man, should in the day of judgment be counted a traitor to Christ. It should be remembered, too, that he was not acting for himself alone in this matter. He had many adherents and converts within the range of his itinerancy, who looked up to him as their pastor and leader, and who, when their time of trial came, would naturally be influenced in their course by his own conduct on the present occasion. He felt this, says Mr. Philip, and nobly resolved to set them an example of unflinching steadfastness.

In reviewing the account of Bunyan's examinations before the justices, and his discourses


with Cobb and others, no considerate person can fail to be struck with the exceeding force, propriety, and conclusiveness of his replies, and the spirit of meekness and love with which they were uttered. We do not at all wonder that the justices "were *set*," and that Cobb "sat still and said no more." In reading the narrative we are forcibly reminded of our Lord's declaration to his followers, "They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist." Well might Bunyan say, as he did at the close of one of his examinations, "I found these words to be more than bare trifles."

CHAPTER IX

MRS. BUNYAN APPLIES TO THE JUDGES FOR
HER HUSBAND'S RELEASE.

ABOUT three weeks after Cobb's visit, and just when the time drew nigh at which Bunyan, if he did not submit, was to suffer banishment, or "worse than that," the coronation of the king took place. This was on the 23d of April, 1661, on which occasion a general pardon was proclaimed of persons accused of offences against the crown, and thousands who had been committed for nonconformity and other offences were set at liberty. Bunyan might also have taken the benefit of this, had not the justices put him down for a convicted person; and as such he could not be released without suing out a pardon, for which twelve months were allowed by the proclamation.

At the next assizes, which were held in August, 1661, Bunyan, not willing to leave unattempted any lawful means that might possibly effect his release, presented several times, through his wife, a petition to the judges, "that he might be heard, and that they would take his case impartially into consideration." What success she met with will be seen from what follows.



The first time Mrs. Bunyan went, she presented the petition to Judge Hale, who very mildly received it, and told her he would do the best he could; but he feared he could do nothing.

The next day, fearing lest in the press of business they should forget the subject, she threw another petition into the coach, to Judge Twisdon; but when he saw it, he angrily told her, that her husband was a convicted person, and could not be released unless he would promise to leave off preaching.

After this she presented another petition to Judge Hale, as he sat on the bench, and he seemed willing to give her a hearing; but Justice Chester, who was present, telling him that Bunyan was a hot-spirited fellow, he waived the matter, and declined interfering.

Encouraged however by the high sheriff, Mrs. Bunyan made another effort to procure her husband's release before the judges left the town. The "two judges, and many justices and gentry of the country, were in company together at the Swan-chamber." With "a bashed face and a trembling heart" she entered the room. Addressing herself to Judge Hale, she said, "I make bold to come once again to your lordship, to know what may be done with my husband."

He replied, "I have told thee before that I

could do thee no good ; because they have taken that for a conviction which thy husband spoke at the sessions : and unless there can be something done to undo that, I can do thee no good."

"My lord," said she, "he is kept unlawfully in prison ; they clapped him up before there was any proclamation against the meetings. The indictment also is false : besides, they never asked him whether he was guilty or no ; neither did he confess the indictment."

One of the justices that stood by said, that he had been lawfully convicted.

"It is false," she replied ; "for when they said to him, 'Do you confess the indictment ?' he said only this, that he had been at several meetings where there was both preaching the word and prayer, and that they had God's presence among them."

"My lord, he was lawfully convicted," said Justice Chester.

"It is false," said she ; "it was but a word of discourse that they took for a conviction."

"But it is recorded, woman, it is recorded," said Chester ; and with these words he often attempted to stop her mouth ; as if it must of necessity be true, because it was recorded.

Mrs. Bunyan then told Judge Hale that she had been to London, to see if she could get her

husband's liberty ; and that while there she had presented a petition in his behalf to Lord Barkwood, one of the House of Lords, who, after showing it to other noblemen, had told her they could not release him, but had committed his releasement to the judges at the next assizes. " And now," she said, " I am come to you to see if anything may be done in this business, and you give me neither releasement nor relief."

" My lord," said Chester, " he is a pestilent fellow ; there is not his fellow in the country again."

" Will your husband leave preaching ?" said Twisdon : " if he will do so, then send for him."

" My lord," said she, " he dares not leave preaching, as long as he can speak."

" See there," cried Twisdon, " what should we talk any more about such a fellow ? Must he do what he lists ? He is a breaker of the peace."

" He desires to live peaceably, my lord," rejoined Mrs. Bunyan, " and to follow his calling, that his family may be maintained. I have four small children that cannot help themselves, one of which is blind ; and we have nothing to live upon but the charity of good people."

" Hast thou four children ?" said Hale ; " thou art but a young woman to have four children."

" My lord," said she, " I am but mother-in-law to them, having not been married to him

yet two full years." She then proceeded to add, that she was near her confinement when her husband was apprehended ; and that the shock brought on premature labour, and the child died.

Upon hearing this, Judge Hale, looking very seriously, exclaimed, " Alas ! poor woman."

Judge Twisdon brutally remarked, that she made poverty her cloak, and that her husband was better maintained by running up and down preaching, than by following his calling.

" What is his calling ?" asked Judge Hale.

" A tinker, my lord," said one of the company.

" Yes," rejoined Mrs. Bunyan, " and because he is a tinker and a poor man, therefore he is despised, and cannot have justice."

Hale evidently felt the force of her appeals, and was disposed to do what he could in her behalf, notwithstanding the violence of the others. He replied very mildly, " I tell thee, woman, seeing it is so, that they have taken what thy husband said for a conviction, thou must apply thyself to the king, or sue out his pardon, or get a writ of error."

Chester, who was one of the justices by whom Bunyan was tried, could not conceal his vexation on hearing the judge give this advice ; especially at his mentioning a writ of error. " My lord," he exclaimed, " he will preach and do what he lists."

“He preaches nothing but the word of God,” said his wife. “He preach the word of God!” said Twisdon, in a rage; “he runneth up and down, and doth harm.”

“No, my lord,” said she, “it is not so; God hath owned him, and done much good by him.”

“God!” said Twisdon, “his doctrine is the doctrine of the devil.”

“My lord,” once more replied this meek, yet spirited woman, “when the righteous Judge shall appear, it will be known that his doctrine is not the doctrine of the devil.”

There was no answering this; and Twisdon, turning to Hale, said, “Do not mind her, my lord, but send her away.”

Hale, evidently moved, said again to her, in a tone of kindness, “I am sorry, woman, that I can do thee no good. Thou must do one of those three things aforesaid, namely, either to apply to the king, or sue out his pardon, or get a writ of error; but a writ of error will be cheapest.”

She several times entreated them to send for her husband, that he might speak for himself, urging that he would be able to give them better satisfaction respecting what they demanded of him: but she could not prevail on them to do so.

In concluding her account, Mrs. Bunyan says, “Though I was somewhat timorous at my

first entrance into the chamber, yet before I went out I could not but break forth into tears, not so much because they were so hard-hearted against me and my husband, but to think what a sad account such poor creatures will have to give at the coming of the Lord." Here Mr. Conder remarks,—“How could she suppose that one of those judges was a man of saintly piety and integrity! And how little did that judge suspect that the prisoner, whose cause was thus pathetically pleaded, was destined, by his writings, to win to himself an everlasting name, as the guide of Christian pilgrims to the heavenly city! At the coming of the Lord, Hale and Bunyan will not be divided.”*

When or by what means Bunyan lost his first wife, he has not told us; and of the second we know nothing more than we have just related. Indeed, throughout his entire narrative he never alludes to his domestic affairs, except incidental-

* Bishop Burnet published a Life of this upright judge, whom he describes as “one of the greatest patterns this age has afforded, whether in his private department as a Christian, or in his public employments either at the bar or on the bench.” Baxter, who was intimately acquainted with him, says, “I, who heard and read his serious expressions of the concernments of eternity, and saw his love to all good men, and the blamelessness of his life, thought better of his piety than my own.”

ly, when it has a bearing on his religious experience, or his public ministry. Mr. St. John pays no small compliment to *both* of Bunyan's wives, when he says of the second, that she was worthy of the first. Of the latter we would say, that she was worthy of Bunyan himself, who evidently records, with much complacency, her intrepid replies to the judges when pleading for his enlargement. That whole scene showed that she had imbibed much of her husband's spirit: she was willing to attempt anything, or face any company, if she might honourably procure his enlargement; but much as she had suffered, and was likely to suffer, in consequence of his imprisonment, she would not have him purchase his liberty at the expense of a good conscience.

It does not appear that Bunyan or his friends made any attempts to effect his release by taking out a writ of error, as recommended by Hale; being probably deterred therefrom either by fear of the expense, or by despair of success. He therefore still continued in prison; but for a time his confinement was not very rigid, owing to the indulgence of his jailer, who seems to have allowed him to go whither and return when he pleased. He was thus enabled to be frequently with his family; and in June and July, 1661, he was present at private meetings of the church,

as appears from the church-book.* As often as he could, he visited the little flocks in the neighbouring villages who had attended his ministry; he was often out in the night; and it is said that several of the Baptist churches in Bedfordshire owe their origin to his midnight preaching.

Bunyan's frequent absence from the prison at length came to the ears of some persecuting prelates, who, says Ivimey, "sent down an officer to talk with the jailer on the subject; and, in order to find him out, he was to arrive there in the middle of the night. Bunyan was at home that night with his family, but so restless that he could not sleep: he therefore told his wife that he must return immediately. He did so; and the jailer blamed him for coming in at so unseasonable an hour. Early in the morning the messenger came, and said, 'Are all the prisoners safe?' 'Yes.' 'Is John Bunyan safe?' 'Yes.' 'Let me see him.' He was called, and appeared, and all was well. After the messenger left, the jailer said to Bunyan, 'Well, you may go

* This book is still preserved. Dr. Fisk, when at Bedford, saw it at the house of Mr. Hillyard. It is entitled, "A Booke containing a Record of the Acts of a Congregation of Christ in and about Bedford." Many of the entries, he says, are in Bunyan's own hand; and some of them during the term of his imprisonment.

out again when you think proper ; for you know when to return better than I can tell you.’ ”

To such an extent did Bunyan possess the confidence of his jailer, that he was even permitted to take a journey to London, to visit some of his Christian brethren there. Unfortunately his enemies heard of this, and “ were so angry, that they had almost cast the jailer out of his place, threatening to indict him, and do what they could against him. They also,” says Bunyan, “ charged me that I went thither to plot and raise division, and make insurrection, which God knows was a slander ; whereupon my liberty was more straitened than it was before, so that I must not look out of the door.”

At the next assizes, which were held in November, 1661, he expected to be “ roundly dealt with,” but he was not called up. At the assizes held in the following January, being desirous to come before the judge, he got the jailer (who still befriended him as far as he could) to put his name into the calendar among the felons, and obtained a promise from the judge and the high sheriff that he should be called. He now thought that he had taken effectual measures for obtaining his desire ; but he was disappointed after all ; for when the assizes came, though his name was in the calendar, and the judge and

sheriff had both promised that he should be called, yet the justices and the clerk of the peace managed matters so as to prevent his appearing. The clerk of the peace, it will be remembered, was Cobb, who now threw off the mask of friendship, and "discovered himself," says Bunyan, "to be one of my greatest opposers; for first he came to my jailer, and told him that I must not go down before the judge, and therefore must not be put in the calendar; to whom my jailer said, that my name was in already. He bid him put me out again: my jailer told him that he could not, for he had given the judge a calendar with my name in it, and also the sheriff another. At this he was very much displeased, and desired to see the calendar that was yet in the jailer's hand: when he had given it him, he looked on it, and said it was a false calendar, and blotted my accusation as my jailer had written it, and put in words to this purpose,—That John Bunyan was committed to prison, being lawfully convicted for upholding of unlawful meetings and conventicles, &c. But yet for all this, fearing that what he had done, unless he added thereto, it would not do, he first run to the clerk of the assizes, then to the justices, and afterward, because he would not leave any means unattempted to hinder me, he comes

again to my jailer, and tells him that if I did go down before the judge, and was released, he would make him pay my fees, which he said were due to him ; and further told him, that he would complain of him at the next quarter sessions for making of false calendars, though my jailer himself, as I afterward learned, had put in my accusation worse than in itself it was by far. And thus was I prevented at that time also from appearing before the judge, and left in prison."

It does not appear that he was ever again brought before the court, or that the judges who had, without a regular trial, unjustly sentenced him to banishment, ever attempted to carry that sentence into execution ; for in another part of his narrative, written before his release from prison, he says, "I have lain there now complete twelve years, waiting to see what God would suffer these men to do with me."

"And while he was suffering under this affliction, between cold stone walls, in a close confinement, his enemies abroad were labouring to press down and stifle his reputation with calumnies and reproaches. They not only reaped up what was true of his former wicked life, but added many grievous things to his charge that he was utterly innocent and ignorant of."—*Old Memoir.*

CHAPTER X.

BUNYAN'S EXPERIENCE, TRIALS, AND CONSOLATIONS DURING HIS IMPRISONMENT.

BUNYAN was not taken by surprise when he was called to suffer in the cause of Christ and his gospel. For more than a year before his commitment, the impression that "bonds and imprisonment," if nothing worse, awaited him, was so strong, that he could seldom go to prayer without having presented to his mind the apostolic petition, "to be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness."

He endeavoured so to discipline his heart, as that he might, through grace, be prepared for, and enabled to endure, the *worst* that could befall him. He reasoned thus with himself:—"If I provide only for a *prison*, then the *whip* comes at unawares; and so doth also the *pillory*. Again, if I only provide for these, then I am not fit for *banishment*. Further, if I conclude that banishment is the worst, then if *death* come I am surprised." He sought therefore to familiarize his mind to these things; to become more dead to the world, "and to live upon God

that is invisible ; as Paul saith the way not to faint is, to ‘look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen.’ ”

The following passages, written near the close of his confinement, show that he was so sustained by divine grace as not only to bear up under his afflictions, but also oftentimes so to mount above them, that, with the apostle, he could even “glory in tribulations,” Rom. v, 7.

He says, “In this condition I have continued with much content, through grace ; but have met with many turnings and goings upon my heart, both from the Lord, from Satan, and my own corruptions ; by all which, glory be to Jesus Christ, I have also received, among many things, much conviction, instruction, and understanding ; of which at large I shall not here discourse, only give you a hint or two—a word that may stir up the godly to bless God and to pray for me, and also to take encouragement, should the case be their own, not to fear what man can do unto them.

“I never had, in all my life, so great an inlet into the word of God as now. Scriptures that I saw nothing in before are made, in this place and state, to shine upon me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now. Here I have seen and felt him indeed. O that word, ‘We have not preached unto you cunning-

ly-devised fables!’ and that,—‘God raised Christ from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God,’ were blessed words unto me in this my imprisoned condition.

“These three or four scriptures also have been great refreshments in this condition to me : John xiv, 1–4 ; xvi, 33 ; Col. iii, 3, 4 ; Heb. xii, 22–24 ; so that sometimes, when I have been in the savour of them, I have been able to ‘laugh at destruction, and to fear neither the horse nor his rider.’ I have sweet sights of the forgiveness of my sins, and of my being with Jesus in another world. O! the ‘Mount Zion—the heavenly Jerusalem—the innumerable company of angels—and God, the Judge of all—and the spirits of just men made perfect—and Jesus,’ have been made sweet unto me in this place. I have seen *that* here, that I am persuaded I shall never, while in this world, be able to express.

“I never knew what it was for God to stand by me at all turns, and at every offer of Satan to afflict me, &c., as I have found since I came in hither : for look, how fears have presented themselves, so have supports and encouragements ; yea, when I have started, even as it were at nothing else but my shadow, yet God, as being very tender of me, hath not suffered me to be molested, but would, with one scripture or

another, strengthen me against all; insomuch that I have often said, Were it lawful, I could pray for greater trouble, for the greater comfort's sake. . 'For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth in Christ.'"

But the condition of his family at this time awakened his tenderest sympathies; and the thought of their destitution, and particularly of the hardships to which he feared his blind daughter might be exposed, caused him many a bitter pang; for he was, as one who knew him testifies, "both a loving and tender husband, and an indulgent parent, perhaps somewhat to a fault." Few passages, even in Bunyan, are more touchingly eloquent than that in which he gives utterance to the feelings of his heart on this subject. He has just been speaking of his spiritual consolation and supports during his imprisonment, and then adds,—

"But notwithstanding these helps, I found myself a man encompassed with infirmities. The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me, in this place, as the pulling the flesh from the bones; and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of these great mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was

like to meet with, should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all beside. O! the thoughts of the hardship I thought my poor blind one might go under, would break my heart to pieces. Poor child! thought I, what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee. But yet recalling myself, thought I, I must venture you all with God, though it goeth to the quick to leave you. O! I saw in this condition I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children; yet, thought I, I must do it, I must do it: and now I thought on those two milch kine that were to carry the ark of God into another country, and to leave their calves behind them." 1 Sam. iv, 10.

His knowledge of Scripture furnished him not only with an apt comparison of his affliction, but also with two precious promises, which he says were a great help to him in this trial: the first was Jer. xlix, 11, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me." The other was Jer. xv, 11, "The Lord said, Verily it shall go well with thy remnant, verily I will cause the

enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil, and in time of affliction." He also derived much support from the consideration, that by venturing all for God, he engaged God to "take care of his concernments;" and he counted that they were quite as safe in his keeping as if he had them in his own hands.

The following passage doubtless relates to one of the "turnings and goings upon his heart," to which allusion has been made in a former paragraph:—"I will tell you a pretty business. I was once, above all the rest, in a very sad and low condition for many weeks; at which time also I, being a young prisoner, and not acquainted with the laws, had this lain much upon my spirits,—that my imprisonment might end at the gallows, for all that I could tell. Now therefore Satan laid hard at me, to beat me out of heart, by suggesting thus unto me: 'But how if, when you come indeed to die, you should be in this condition; that is, as not to *savour* the things of God, nor to have any evidence upon your soul for a better state hereafter?' (for at that time all the things of God were hid from my soul.)

"Wherefore, when I at first began to think of this, it was a great trouble to me; for I thought with myself, that in the condition I now was, I was not fit to die; neither indeed did I think I

could, if I should be called to it. Besides, I thought with myself, if I should make a *scrambling shift* to clamber up the ladder, yet I should, either with quaking or other symptoms of fainting, give occasion to the enemy to reproach the way of God, and his people for their timorousness. This therefore lay with great trouble upon me; for methought I was ashamed to die with a *pale face* and *tottering knees*, in such a cause as this. Wherefore I prayed to God, that he would comfort me, and give me strength to do and suffer what he should call me to. Yet no comfort appeared, but all continued hid.

“I was also at this time so really possessed with the thought of death, that oft I was as if *on* the ladder, with a rope about my neck: only this was some encouragement to me,—I thought I might now have an opportunity to speak my last words to a multitude which I thought would come to see me die; and, thought I, if it must be so, if God will but convert one soul by my last words, I shall not count my life thrown away nor lost.

“But yet all the things of God were kept out of my sight, and still the tempter followed me with, ‘But whither must you *go* when you die? What will become of you? Where will you be found in another world? What evidence have you for heaven and glory, and an inheritance

among them that are sanctified?’ Thus was I tossed for many weeks, and knew not what to do. At last this consideration fell with weight upon me, ‘That it was for the word and way of God that I was in this condition; wherefore I was engaged not to flinch an hair’s breadth from it.’

“I thought also, that God might choose whether he would give me comfort *now*, or at the hour of death; but I might not therefore choose whether I would hold my profession or no. I was *bound*, but he was free: yea, it was my duty to stand to his word, whether he would ever look upon me, or save me at the last: wherefore, thought I, the point being thus, I am for going on, and venturing my eternal state with Christ, whether I have comfort here or no. If God doth not come in, thought I, I will leap off the ladder, even *blindfold*, into eternity,—sink or swim,—come heaven, come hell: Lord Jesus, if thou wilt catch me, do; if not, I will venture for thy name.

“I was no sooner fixed upon this resolution, but the word dropped upon me, ‘Doth Job serve God for naught?’ as if the accuser had said, ‘Lord, Job is no upright man; he serves thee for by-respects: hast thou not made an hedge about him? But put forth now thine hand, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to

thy face.' Job i, 9-11. How now, thought I; is *this* the sign of a renewed soul, to desire to serve God when all is taken from him? Is he a godly man that will serve God for nothing, rather than give out? Blessed be God, then, I hope *I* have an upright heart; for I am resolved, God giving me strength, never to deny my profession, though I have nothing for my pains. . . . Now was my heart full of comfort, for I hoped it was sincere. I would not have been without this trial for much: I am comforted every time I think of it; and I hope I shall bless God for ever for the teaching I have had by it."

Under the title of "Prison Meditations, dedicated to the heart of suffering saints and reigning sinners," Bunyan set forth in rhyme the joys of those who suffer for righteousness' sake. The poem contains seventy stanzas in all; but the following will suffice for a specimen:—

"I am indeed in prison now
In body, but my mind
Is free to follow Christ, and here
Unto me he is kind.

For though men keep my outward man
Within their locks and bars,
Yet by the faith of Christ I can
Mount higher than the stars.

Their fetters cannot spirits tame,
Nor tie up God from me;

My faith and hope they cannot lame,
Above them I shall be.

I here am very much refresh'd,
To think, when I was out,
I preached life, and peace, and rest,
To sinners round about.

The prison very sweet to me
Hath been since I came here;
And so would also hanging be,
If God would there appear.

This jail to us is as a hill,
From whence we plainly see
Beyond this world, and take our fill
Of things that lasting be.

Consider, man, what I have said,
And judge of things aright;
When all men's cards are fully play'd,
Whose will abide the light?

Will those who have us hither cast?
Or those who do us scorn?
Or those who do our houses waste?
Or us who have this borne?

And let us count those things the best,
That best will prove at last;
And count such men the only blest,
That do such things hold fast."

It is readily granted that there is much more truth than *poetry* in these lines. Indeed Bunyan, though he loved to rhyme, is never less poetical than when he attempts to give his thoughts the *form* of poetry.

CHAPTER XI.

BUNYAN'S EMPLOYMENTS AND STUDIES DURING
HIS IMPRISONMENT.

THE *rigour* of Bunyan's confinement appears to have continued about seven years. In the early part of his imprisonment, as the reader will remember, he was, through the kindness of his jailer, permitted to be often at large, so that he frequently attended the private meetings of the society at Bedford. He was there in July, 1661, but from that time to August, 1668, his name is not found on their minutes, nor is it known that during that whole period he was ever allowed to pass the threshold of the prison.

But though closely confined, it does not appear that he was denied the visits of his family and friends. One of his early biographers says, "It was by making him a visit in prison that I first saw him, and became acquainted with him; and I must confess, I could not but look upon him to be a man of an excellent spirit, zealous for his Master's honour, and cheerfully committing all his own concerns unto God's disposal. . . . Nor did he, while he was in prison, spend his time in a supine or careless manner,

or eat the bread of idleness ; for there I have been witness, that his own hands have ministered to his and to his family's necessities, by making many hundred gross of long tagged thread laces, to fill up the vacancies of his time, which he had learned for that purpose, since he had been in prison." He was thus, notwithstanding the severities he endured, enabled to contribute something to the support of those whom he loved. What was lacking was doubtless supplied by the charity of Christian friends.

He was not even now without opportunities for exercising his ministerial gifts. If *he* was in confinement, "the word of God was not bound." Although he was the first in that part of the country to be shut up for nonconformity, yet it was not long before he was favoured with the society of some who were suffering in the same cause. Among these were two Baptist preachers, Messrs. Wheeler and Dunn, with whom Bunyan took his turn in expounding the Scriptures to his fellow-prisoners. "What an alleviation to the sorrows of the people," observes Mr. Ivimey, "that they had such ministers to preach to them ! and what pleasure must it have been to these, that they had such godly people to preach to, who would rather suffer than sin !" The writer mentioned in the pre-

ceding page as visiting Bunyan in his confinement says, "When I was there, above three-score dissenters were in the prison besides himself, taken but a little before at a religious meeting at Kaistow, in the county of Bedford; besides two eminent dissenting ministers; by which means the prison was much crowded. Yet in the midst of all that hurry which so many new comers occasioned, I have heard Mr. Bunyan both preach and pray with that mighty spirit of faith, and plethora of divine assistance, that has made me stand and wonder."

He would sometimes be visited in prison by those who sought to him for counsel. He gives an instance of this in his *Life and Death of Mr. Badman*:—"When I was in prison there came a woman to me that was under a great deal of trouble; so I asked her, she being a stranger to me, what she had to say to me. She said she was afraid she should be damned. I asked her the cause of those fears. She told me that she had some time since lived with a shopkeeper at Wellingborough, and had robbed his box in the shop, several times, of money, to the value of more than now I will say: 'and pray,' says she, 'tell me what I shall do?' I told her I would have her go to her master, and make him satisfaction. She said she was afraid. I asked her

why? She said she doubted he would hang her. I told her that I would intercede for her life, and would make use of other friends too, and do the like; but she told me she durst not venture that. 'Well,' said I, 'shall I send to your master, while you abide out of sight, and make your peace with him before he sees you?' and with that I asked her master's name. But all that she said in answer to this was, 'Pray let it alone till I come to you again.' So away she went, and neither told me her master's name, nor her own. This is about ten or twelve years since, and I never saw her again."

An anecdote is also related of a Quaker who called to see him, not long before his release, hoping perhaps to make a convert of the pilgrim. He thus addressed him: "Friend John, I am come to thee with a message from the Lord, and after searching in all the prisons in England, I am glad I have found thee at last." "Friend," replied Bunyan, "thou dost not speak truth in saying the Lord sent thee to seek me; for the Lord knows I have been in Bedford jail these twelve years, and if *he* had sent thee, he would have sent thee here directly."

Bunyan's books and his pen doubtless occupied most of his leisure hours, and served to relieve the tedium of his confinement. Of the

former his collection was remarkably select, consisting most of the time of two books only,—the Bible, and the Book of Martyrs. This, however, was doubtless the result of choice rather than of necessity. His copy of the Book of Martyrs is still in existence: it is of the edition of 1641, and is printed in black letter, in three folio volumes. He has written his name in a stout print-hand on the title-page of each volume. One of these autographs (a fac-simile of which is given on the next page) is dated 1662, and must therefore have been written during his imprisonment. Under several of the prints he has inserted some doggerel rhymes, which must have been among his first attempts in that way. Miserable as they are, “he no doubt,” says Dr. Southey, “found difficulty enough in tinkering them to make him proud of his work when it was done; for otherwise he would not have written them in a book which was the most valuable of all his goods and chattels.” We give two of the verses, with a fac-simile of one, which will serve as specimens of Bunyan’s orthography and penmanship in early life, for they must undoubtedly, as Dr. Southey remarks, have been written some years before the autograph of 1662, if not before the publication of his first tract.

Fac-simile of Bunyan's hand-writing.

JOHN BUNYAN. 1662

doth the only to them appear
which put them all to sleep.
Will not the man in the crown
Ought the only to the ground.

The first was inserted under a print entitled, "The Description of the Popes Councell holden at Rome, in which appeared a monstrous Owle, to the utter defacing of the Pope and all his Clergie." See the note on page 331.

"Doth the owle to them apper
Which put them all into a fear
Will not the man and trubel crown
Cast the owle into the ground."

The following was written under a print representing the martyrdom of Thomas Hawkes, who, having promised his friends to lift up his hands before he died, in token that his mind was kept in peace, after his speech was gone, raised his scorched arms in triumph toward heaven.

"hear is one stout and strong in deed
he doth not waver like as doth a reed,
a Signe he give them yea last of all
that are obedant to the heavenly call."

Justice to Bunyan, however, requires us to remark here, that he lived "before the age of spelling-books," and that in his day persons of the highest distinction might be found whose orthography was quite as loose as his.*

* The following literal extract from a letter, written in 1700, by the celebrated Lady Rachel Russell, will substantiate this remark. She is giving an account of the damages occasioned by a storm. "hampshire is al deso-

Some of Bunyan's best works, including the first part of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, were among the fruits of his imprisonment; so that that event, in the providence of God, "fell out rather to the furtherance of the gospel;" for though by it he was for a few years debarred the public exercise of his ministry, yet by means of these books he has continued to preach, and preach effectively too, to countless thousands, for now more than one hundred and fifty years, and will doubtless continue to do so to the end of time. No thanks, however, are due to his persecutors for this result. They "meant not so, neither did their heart think so."

It was doubtless to this legacy to the church that Bunyan refers in the following passage, where, in one of his happiest appropriations of Scripture language, he applies to his own case the words of the sacred writer in recording David's contributions toward the building of the temple. 1 Chron. xxvi, 27. It occurs at the close of his *Brief Account of his Imprisonment*. "Many more of the dealings of God toward me

lation. devon-house scapet better than any house I heare of. Many kiled in country as wel as in towne. Lady penelope wickless kiled in her bed at ther country house, and he in y^e sam bed saved, a piece of timber faling betweene his legs, and kept of y^e bricks."

I might relate, but these out of the *spoils won in battle* have I dedicated to maintain the house of God." These "spoils," remarks Mr. Philip, happily remain for the use of the church.

For how many of Bunyan's works we are indebted to his imprisonment, it is difficult to determine, as some which he wrote during that period were not published till some years after his release. Concerning the following, however, there is no doubt:—Sighs from Hell; or the Groans of a damned Soul—The Two Covenants: Law and Grace—Discourse on Prayer—A Map of Salvation, &c.—One Thing is Needful; or Serious Meditations upon the Four Last Things—Ebal and Gerizim; or the Blessing and the Curse—Prison Meditations—The Holy City; or the New Jerusalem—The Resurrection of the Dead, and eternal Judgment—Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners—Defence of the Doctrine of Justification, against Bp. Fowler—A Confession of my Faith, and a Reason of my Practice—The PILGRIM'S PROGRESS: Part I.

In the Address to the Reader, prefixed to the first-mentioned of the above works, the author thus alludes to his persecutions:—"Friend, if thou dost love me, pray for me, that my God would not forsake me, nor take his Holy Spirit from me; and that God would fit me to do and

suffer what shall be from the world or devil inflicted upon me. I must tell thee, the world rages ; they stamp, and shake their heads ; and fain they would be *doing*. The Lord help me to take all they shall do with patience ; and when they smite the one cheek, to turn the other to them, that I may do as Christ hath bidden me ; for then the Spirit of God and of glory shall rest upon me."

One of the old lives of Bunyan states that another work, entitled, "Christian Behaviour, being the Fruits of true Christianity," was written during his confinement: and to the same period (though it was not published till 1675) we think must be referred the authorship of his "Instructions for the Ignorant;" for in dedicating it "To the Church of Christ in and about Bedford," he speaks of his being "*driven from them* in presence, not in affection;" and subscribes himself, "Yours, to serve you by my ministry (*when I can*) to your edification," &c. Mr. Philip also gives some plausible reasons for supposing the "Divine Emblems" to have been one of his prison labours.

His "Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners," was written and published for the edification and encouragement of his spiritual children. Having already given our readers the

substance of this narrative, we here append the dedicatory preface, which may be regarded as a kind of pastoral letter. It is addressed

“To those whom God hath counted me worthy to beget to Faith by my Ministry in the Word.

“CHILDREN,—Grace be with you. Amen. I being taken from you in presence, and so tied up that I cannot perform that duty that from God doth lie upon me to you-ward, for your further edifying and building up in faith and holiness, &c. ; yet that you may see my soul hath fatherly care and desire after your spiritual and everlasting welfare, I now once again, as before from the top of Shenir and Hermon, so now from the lion’s den, and from the mountain of the leopards, (Solomon’s Song iv, 8,) do look yet after you all, greatly longing to see your safe arrival in the desired haven.

“I thank God upon every remembrance of you ; and rejoice, even while I stick between the teeth of the lions in the wilderness, that the grace, and mercy, and knowledge of Christ our Saviour, which God hath bestowed upon you, with abundance of faith and love ; your hungerings and thirstings after further acquaintance with the Father, in the Son ; your tenderness of heart, your trembling at sin, your sober and

holy deportment also, before both God and men, is a great refreshment to me ; for ‘you are my glory and joy.’ 1 Thess. ii, 20.

“I have sent you here enclosed a drop of that honey that I have taken out of the carcass of a lion : (Judg. xiv, 5–8 :) I have eaten thereof myself, and am much refreshed thereby. (Temptations, when we meet them at first, are as the lion that roared upon Samson ; but if we overcome them, the next time we see them, we shall find a nest of honey within them.) The Philistines understand me not. It is something of a relation of the work of God upon my soul, even from the very first till now, wherein you may perceive my castings down and risings up : for he woundeth, and his hands make whole. It is written in the Scripture, ‘The father to the children shall make known the truth of God,’ Isa. xxxviii, 19. Yea, it was for this reason I lay so long at Sinai, ‘to see the fire, and the cloud, and the darkness, that I might fear the Lord all the days of my life upon earth, and tell of his wondrous works to my children, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from our children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he

established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known unto their children.' Deut. iv, 10, 11; Psa. lxxviii, 3-5.

"Moses wrote of the journeyings of the children of Israel from Egypt to the land of Canaan; (Num. xxxiii, 1, 2;) and commanded also that they did remember their forty years' travel in the wilderness. Deut. viii, 1, 2. Wherefore this I have endeavoured to do;* and not only so, but to publish it also; that, if God will, others may be put in remembrance of what he hath done for their souls, by reading of his work upon me.

"It is profitable for Christians to be often calling to mind the very beginnings of grace with their souls. 'It is a night much to be observed unto the Lord, for bringing them out of the land of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord, to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.' Exod. xii, 42. 'O, my God,' saith David, 'my soul is cast down within me; but I will remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill

* Does not Bunyan here allude to his own age? He was but thirty-two years old at the beginning of his imprisonment, and therefore it is not improbable that he was about forty when he wrote his narrative.

Mizar.' Psa. xlii, 6. He remembered also the lion and the bear, when he went to fight with the giant of Gath. 1 Sam. xvii, 36, 37.

"It was Paul's accustomed manner, and that when tried for his life, even to open before his judges the manner of his conversion. He would think of that day, and that hour, in which he first did meet with grace; for he found it supported him. When God had brought the children of Israel out of the Red Sea, far into the wilderness, yet they must turn quite about thither again, to remember the drowning of their enemies there; (Num. xiv, 25;) for though they sang His praise before, they soon forgot his works. Psa. cvi, 12, 13.

"In this discourse of mine you may see much; much, I say, of the grace of God toward me. I thank God, I can count it much, for it was above my sins, and Satan's temptations too. I can remember my fears, and doubts, and sad months, with comfort; they are as the head of Goliath in my hand. There was nothing to David like Goliath's sword, even that sword that should have been sheathed in his bowels; for the very sight and remembrance of that did preach forth God's deliverance to him. O! the remembrance of my great sins, of my great temptations, and of my great fear of perishing for ever! they bring

afresh into my mind the remembrance of my great help, my great supports from heaven, and the great grace that God extended to such a wretch as I.

“ My dear children, call to mind the former days and years of ancient times : remember also your songs in the night, and commune with your own heart ; say, in times of distress, ‘ Will the Lord cast off for ever ? and will he be favourable no more ? Is his mercy clean gone for ever ? Doth his promise fail for evermore ? Hath God forgotten to be gracious ? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies ? And I said, This is my infirmity ; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord ; surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.’ Psa. lxxvii, 5-12. Yea, look diligently, and leave no corner therein unsearched, for that treasure hid, even the treasure of your first and second experience of the grace of God toward you. Remember your terrors of conscience, and fears of death and hell : remember also your tears and prayers to God ; yea, how you sighed under every hedge for mercy. Have you never a hill Mizar to remember ? Have you forgot the close, the milk house, the stable, the barn, and the

like, where God did visit your souls? * Remember also the word—the word, I say, upon which the Lord hath caused you to hope. If you have sinned against light; if you are tempted to blaspheme; if you are drowned in despair; if you think God fights against you; or if heaven is hid from your eyes; remember it was thus with your father; ‘but out of them all the Lord delivered me.’

“I could have enlarged much, in this my discourse, of my temptations and troubles for sin; as also of the merciful kindness and working of God with my soul. I could also have stepped into a style much higher than this in which I have here discoursed, and could have adorned all things more than here I have seemed to do, but I dare not: God did not play in tempting of me; neither did I play when I sunk as into the bottomless pit, when the angels of hell caught hold upon me; wherefore I may not play in relating of them, but be plain and simple, and lay down the thing as it was: he that liketh it, let him receive it; and he that doth not, let him produce a better. Farewell.

“My dear children, the milk and honey are beyond this wilderness. God be merciful to

* He is here probably alluding to various places in which he had met with them for worship. See p. 150.

you, and grant that you be not slothful to go in to possess the land.

JOHN BUNYAN."

Such has been the popularity of "Grace Abounding," that when Mr. Ivimey wrote, (in 1809,) fifty editions of it had been published, and perhaps nearly as many more have been issued since that time. "The very extreme plainness of the work adds to its power. Never was the inward life of any being depicted with more vehement and burning language: it is an intensely vivid description of the workings of a mind of the keenest sensibility and most fervid imagination, convinced of its guilt, and fully awake to all the dread realities of eternity. In this work we behold not only the general discipline by which Bunyan attained that spiritual wisdom and experience exhibited in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, but there are particular passages of it in which we see the evident germs of that work of genius."—*N. A. Review*.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* was the crowning piece of Bunyan's prison labours. In the opening sentence he at once informs the reader where it was conceived and executed:—"As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a *den*, and laid me down in that place to sleep; and, as I

slept, I dreamed a dream." This "den," as he tells us in the margin, was "the jail."

The composition of this work was probably one of his greatest enjoyments during his imprisonment. "It was the only one of his joys which he allowed neither stranger nor friend to intermeddle with. He kept it 'a fountain sealed,' from all his family and fellow-prisoners, until it was completed. Dunn, or Wheeler, or any other companion, might hear a page, or obtain a peep, of any of his other works, while they were planning or in progress; but the Pilgrim was for no eye nor ear but his own, until he '*awoke* out of his dream.' He never once, during all that dream, '*talked* in his sleep.'" This fact we have never seen noticed by any writer but Mr. Philip, (from whom we have taken the preceding quotation,) although Bunyan himself has strongly stated it in his preface, where he says,—

"Matter and manner too were all my own,
Nor was it unto any mortal known,
Till I had done it."

To the *world* he did not tell his dream till some years after his release; we will therefore postpone any further remarks upon it until we arrive at the period of its publication.

CHAPTER XII.

LAST YEARS OF HIS IMPRISONMENT: ELECTION
TO THE PASTORSHIP: HIS RELEASE.

THE strictness of Bunyan's confinement appears to have been considerably abated during the last four years of its continuance ; for in 1669, 1670, and 1671, he was regularly present at the church meetings, as appears from the records, which also contain three appointments for him to visit disorderly members, in 1668. This liberty must doubtless, as in the former instance, be ascribed to the friendship of the jailer ; for the spirit of persecution was then raging more strongly than ever. The "Conventicle Act," which had expired some time before, was, in October, 1669, re-enacted, with additional clauses, rendering it much more severe ; and in 1670 it received the royal assent. This abominable Act, which was first passed in 1663, provided, "That every person above sixteen years of age, present at any meeting, under pretence of any exercise of religion, in other manner than is the practice of the Church of England, where there are five persons more than the household, shall, for the first offence, by a justice of peace be recorded, and

sent to jail three months, or pay £5 ; and for the second offence, six months, or pay £10 ; and for the third time, being convicted by a jury, shall be banished to some of the American plantations, except New-England or Virginia, for seven years, or pay £100 ; and in case such a person return, or make his escape, he is to be adjudged a felon, and *suffer death without benefit of clergy.*" It was a great hardship attending this Act, that it gave a justice the power to convict a person without jury ; for if the convicted person was innocent, there was no relief to be obtained, the justice being both judge and jury.* It was also rendered more grievous from its ambiguity. "No man that ever I met with," says Baxter, "could tell what was a violation of it, and what not, not knowing what was allowed by the Liturgy and practice of the Church of England in families, because the Liturgy meddleth not with families ; and among the diversity of family practice, no man knoweth what to call the practice of the Church. According to the plain words of the Act, if a man did but preach and pray, or read some licensed book, and sing psalms, he might have more than four present, because these are allowed by the practice of the Church in the church ; and the Act

* Slate's Memoirs of Oliver Heywood, 8vo., p. 107.

seemeth to grant an indulgence for place and number, so be it the quality of the exercise be allowed by the Church. But when it came to the trial, these pleas with the justices were in vain ; (for if men did but pray, it was taken for granted that it was an exercise not allowed by the Church of England, and to jail they went.) . . The people were in a great strait, those especially who dwelt near any busy officer, or malicious enemy. Many durst not pray in their families, if above four persons came in to dine with them, . . . and some scarce durst crave a blessing on their meat, or give God thanks for it. Some thought they might venture, if they withdrew into another room, and left the strangers by themselves ; but others said, it is all one if it be in the same house, though out of hearing, when it cometh to the judgment of the justices. . . . Great lawyers said, if you come on a visit of business, though you be present at prayer or sermon, it is no breach of the law, because you met not *on pretence of a religious exercise*: but those that tried them said, such words are but wind, when the justices come to judge you.”* In the new Act it was provided that all doubtful clauses should be interpreted in the sense most unfavourable to conventicles, (as all places of

* Orme's Life of Baxter, vol. i, pp. 221, 222.

worship not belonging to the established Church were then called,) it being the intention of parliament "entirely to suppress them."

The enforcement of this Act was, in many places, the cause of much suffering to the pious nonconformists. Among others, Bunyan's religious friends at Bedford came in for their share; and several of them had their goods distrained to pay the fines imposed upon them for worshipping God according to the dictates of their own conscience. To the honour of the people of Bedford it should be mentioned, that they gave no countenance to this legalized plunder of their unoffending fellow-townsmen; a church warden and a constable were fined £5 each for refusing to aid in seizing goods; and after the goods *were* taken, the regular porters could not be induced to carry them away, some of them saying, they "would be hung, drawn, and quartered, before they would assist in that work."*

Forster, one of the justices by whom Bunyan was tried, appears to have been the prime agent, or ringleader, in this persecution of the Bedford congregation; a circumstance which of itself renders it pretty certain that the measure of liberty which Bunyan now enjoyed was owing entirely to the "favour" which God "gave him

* A fuller account is given in Philip's Life of Bunyan.

in the sight of the keeper of the prison." Of this liberty he availed himself to visit his Christian friends, and no doubt encouraged them to "take joyfully the spoiling of their goods," rather than "forsake the assembling of themselves together." Indeed, had all the nonconformists of that age, both preachers and people, manifested the same determined spirit that was shown by Bunyan and his friends, and by the Quakers, the unrighteous enactments of a persecuting prelacy would have become a dead letter from sheer inability to enforce them.*

In the eleventh year of his imprisonment he was elected one of the pastors of the congregation at Bedford, as appears from the following extract from the "Booke" of records already referred to:—"On the 24th of August, 1671, the church were directed to seek to God about

* In London "the Quakers were so resolute, and so gloried in their constancy and sufferings, that they assembled openly, near Aldersgate, and were dragged away daily to the common jail; and yet desisted not, but the rest came the next day, nevertheless; so that the jail at Newgate was filled with them. Abundance of them died in prison, and yet they continued their assemblies still. They would sometimes meet only to sit in silence, when, as they said, the Spirit did not move them; and it was a great question, whether this silence was a religious exercise not allowed by the Liturgy."—*Baxter*.

the choice of brother Bunyan to the office of elder or co-pastor ; to which office he was called on the 24th of the tenth month, in the same year, when he received of the elders the right hand of fellowship." Mr. Doe further informs us, that the pastor of the congregation dying, Bunyan was, on the 12th of December, 1671, chosen his successor, thus becoming the sole pastor.

Mr. Ivimey expresses some surprise that Bunyan should have been elected to this office while still in confinement ; but it should be remembered, that he now enjoyed considerable liberty, regularly attending all the private meetings of the church ; and it is not unlikely that at that time some steps were taken toward procuring his release, which appears to have been effected about a year afterward.

Shortly after his ordination, Bunyan published " A Defence of the Doctrine of Justification by Jesus Christ," in reply to a treatise on " The Design of Christianity," by Dr. Fowler, who attributes justification to human merit. He did not get the doctor's book till the 13th of November, 1671, yet he finished his refutation on the 27th of the following month. At the close of it he says, " The points in controversy between us are (as I do heartily believe) fundamental

truths of the Christian religion. Let all men know, that I quarrel not with him about things wherein I dissent from the Church of England ; but do contend for the truth contained in these very Articles from which he hath so deeply revolted."

Of this work Mr. Philip thus speaks :—" It is a very remarkable treatise on justification by faith ; and must have completed the confidence of the church in their choice of Bunyan to the pastorate. They had long known him as a *good* minister of Jesus Christ, and this proved him to be an *able* minister of the New Testament."

Fowler in reply got up a scurrilous pamphlet of seventy-eight pages, entitled, " Dirt Wip't off : or a manifest discovery of the gross ignorance, erroneousness, and most unchristian and wicked spirit of John Bunyan, Lay Preacher in Bedford ; which he hath shown in a vile pamphlet." " This tirade," says Mr. Philip, " was published in 1672. It does not bear Fowler's name ; but pretends to be the work of an anonymous friend. And it may have been written by an amanuensis ; but, throughout, it is evidently the dictate of Fowler himself. I am compelled to say this, after many zealous efforts to remove the odium of vulgar scurrility from a

scholar who reached the bench." Fowler was afterward made a bishop.

Bunyan's next publication was entitled, "A Confession of my Faith, and a Reason of my Practice ; or with who, and who not, I can hold Church Fellowship, or the Communion of Saints : Shewing by divers Arguments, that though I dare not communicate with the open Profane, yet I can with those visible Saints that differ about Water Baptism ; wherein is also discoursed, whether that be the entering Ordinance into Fellowship or no." This was published in 1772. It is customary among the dissenters in England for preachers to make a confession of their faith when set apart to the work of the ministry. Whether the work just mentioned is the statement of his doctrine, given by Bunyan at his ordination, we cannot tell ; but, from its appearing so shortly after that event, it is highly probable that it is so. The latter part of it, which treats on the terms of communion, brought him into a controversy with some of his Baptist brethren, which we shall hereafter have occasion to notice.

The precise period of Bunyan's liberation is uncertain. He was arrested in November, 1660, and from all accounts he appears to have lain in prison a little more than twelve years : his

release then probably took place somewhere in the early part of 1773.* His deliverance is attributed, by all cotemporary writers, to the interference of Dr. Barlow, bishop of Lincoln. One of them tells us that "Dr. Barlow and other Churchmen" pitied "his hard and unreasonable sufferings so far as to stand very much his friends, in procuring his enlargement." Another says,

* In his "Brief Account" of his imprisonment, he says, "Being delivered up into the jailer's hands, I was had home to prison, and there have lain now *complete twelve years*, waiting to see what God would suffer these men to do with me." When he wrote this he was still in confinement. Some time in 1672 his church held a day of thanksgiving for "present liberty." One of his biographers erroneously supposes this to have been on the account of Bunyan's liberation; but it was too early for that: it was probably occasioned by the royal proclamation, issued on the 15th of March, 1672, declaring "that his majesty, by virtue of his *supreme power in matters ecclesiastical*, suspends all penal laws thereabouts, and that he will grant a convenient number of public meeting-places to men of all sorts that conform not. Provided the persons are approved by him; that they only meet in places sanctioned by him, with open doors, and do not preach seditiously, nor against the Church of England." The real object of this was not to benefit the Protestant non-conformists, but to secure liberty to the Roman Catholics, whom the king greatly favoured: but the indulgence which it allowed did not long continue, for in the following February parliament voted the proclamation illegal.

“After this blessed man had suffered twelve years’ imprisonment for the testimony of a good conscience, and stopped the mouths of his greatest enemies by his holy, harmless, and inoffensive conversation, it pleased the Lord to stir up the heart of Dr. Barlow, bishop of Lincoln, to be a means of his deliverance; which I mention to the bishop’s honour.” A third informs us that Bunyan, “as a hearty acknowledgment” of the bishop’s services, “returned him his unfeigned thanks, and also often remembered him in his prayers, as next to God his deliverer.” Mr. Ivimey attempts to show that Barlow has received much more credit in the matter than was due to him; but the concurrent testimonies given above seem to make it certain that he had some agency in procuring Bunyan’s liberation. What he did, however, was done before he became bishop of Lincoln, which was not till two or three years after.*

In what manner this was effected is not known. It was certainly not the result of any submission on Bunyan’s part; for he preached

* In his edition of the *Pilgrim’s Progress*, recently published, Mr. Philip says, “Bunyan’s liberation from prison was obtained from Charles II., by Whitehead, the Quaker. This discovery was not made when I published his *Life* in 1839.” What foundation there may be for the above statement we know not.

and held meetings immediately after his release ; and in a work written but a few months before that event, he says, " I have not hitherto been so sordid as to stand to a doctrine, right or wrong ; much less when so weighty an argument as above eleven years' imprisonment is continually dogging of me to weigh and pause, and pause again, the grounds and foundations of those principles for which I thus have suffered ; but having not only at my trial asserted them, but also since, even all this tedious track of time, in cold blood, a thousand times, by the word of God, examined them, and found them good, I cannot, I dare not now revolt or deny the same, on pain of eternal damnation. Excepting this one thing, for which I ought not to be rebuked, I shall, I trust, in despite of slander and falsehood, discover myself at all times a peaceable and obedient servant. But if nothing will do, unless I make of my conscience a continual butchery and slaughter-shop,—unless, putting out my own eyes, I commit me to the blind to lead me, as I doubt is desired by some,—I have determined, the almighty God being my help and shield, yet to suffer, if frail life should continue so long, even *till the moss shall grow on mine eyebrows*, rather than thus to violate my faith and principles."

“ Being now again at liberty, and having, through mercy, shaken off his bodily fetters, (for those upon his soul were broken before, by the abounding grace that filled his heart,) he went to visit those that had been a comfort to him in his tribulation, with a Christian-like acknowledgment of their kindness and charity ; giving encouragement by his example, if it happened to be their hard haps to fall into affliction or trouble, then to suffer patiently for the sake of a good conscience, and for the love of God in Jesus Christ toward their souls.”—*Doe*.

Soon after his enlargement his congregation built him a church. The ground on which it stood was bought by subscription on the 11th of August, 1672. The original agreement for the ground is still preserved. “ It is between J. Ruffhead, shoemaker, and John Bunyan, brazier, both of Bedford, for £50, lawful money.”—*Philip*.

In the following year his eldest son, Thomas, became a member of the society, and was no doubt received with rapture by his father to the church and table of the Lord. It is thus recorded in the church book :—“ The 6th of the eleventh month, 1673, Thomas Bunyan received into communion.”

CHAPTER XIII.

BUNYAN DEFENDS THE PRACTICE OF COMMUNING
WITH ALL TRUE CHRISTIANS.

To the Confession of Faith, which Bunyan published soon after his ordination, he appended what he called, "A Reason of my Practice; or with who, and who not, I can hold Church Fellowship, or the Communion of Saints." It is well known to be the practice of the Baptists, in general, to admit none to their communion but those who are baptized in *their* sense of the term, that is, immersed on a profession of their faith; thus excluding all but the members of their own persuasion. The church at Bedford, as has already been stated, though composed chiefly of Baptists, was constituted on more liberal principles, requiring no other terms of communion than "a profession of faith in Christ, attended by holiness of life." This drew upon them considerable reproach from the strict-communion Baptists, which occasioned the publication of the treatise just named. In it Bunyan, after stating that he cannot commune with any who "profess not faith and holiness," or whose conduct does not consist with such a profession,

proceeds to vindicate the practice of the church of which he was now the pastor ; showing that it was their duty to hold communion with all that were “ visible saints,” whether they were baptized or not. Like other Baptists, he held infant baptism to be no baptism at all ; but then he maintained, that as on the one hand baptism did not make a person a Christian, so neither on the other did the want of it prevent him from being one. He says, “ A failure in such a circumstance as water doth not unchristian us, . . . for thousands of thousands that could not consent thereto as we have, more glorious than we are like to do, acquitted themselves and their Christianity before men, and are now with the ‘ innumerable company of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect.’ What is said of eating, or the contrary, (Rom. xiv ; 1 Cor. viii,) may, as to this, be said of water baptism. Neither if I be baptized am I the better ; neither if I be not am I the worse : not the better before God, not the worse before men ; still meaning as Paul doth, providing I walk according to my light with God ; (otherwise it is false ; for if a man that seeth it to be his duty shall despisingly neglect it, or if he that hath no faith therein shall foolishly take it up, both these are for this the worse, being convicted in themselves for

transgressors.) He therefore that doth it according to his light, doth well ; and he that doth it not, or dare not do it, for want of light, doth not ill ; for he approveth his heart to be sincere with God. . . . If therefore he be not by grace a partaker of light in that circumstance which thou professest, yet he is a partaker of that liberty and mercy by which thou standest. He hath liberty to call God Father, as thou, and to believe he shall be saved by Jesus ; his faith, as thine, hath purified his heart ; he is tender of the glory of God, as thou art ; and can claim by grace an inheritance in heaven." On the ground therefore that the circumstances in which the Baptists differed from their brethren were such as "neither make nor mar Christianity," he urges, "Let us love one another, and walk together, leaving each other in all such circumstances to our own Master, to our own faith. 'Who art thou that judgest another man's servant ? to his own master he standeth or falleth.' What greater contempt can be thrown upon the saints, than for their brethren to cast them off, or to debar them from church communion ? . . . What can the church do more to the sinners, or open profane ? Civil commerce you will have with the worst, and what more will you have with these ? Perhaps you will say,

‘ We can pray and preach with these, and hold them Christians, saints, and godly.’ Well, but let me ask you one word further : Do you believe that, of very conscience, they cannot consent, as you, to that of water baptism ; and that if they had light therein they would as willingly do it as you ? Why then, as I have shewed you, our refusal to hold communion with them is without a ground from the word of God.

“ But can you commit your soul to their ministry, and join with them in prayer, and yet not count them meet for other gospel privileges ? I would know by what scripture you do it ? . . . If thou canst hear them as God’s ministers, and sit under their ministry as God’s ordinance, then shew me where God hath such a gospel ministry as that the person ministering may not, though desiring it, be admitted with you to the closest communion of saints.”*

* The inconsistency of churches refusing to commune with those whom they yet recognise as fellow-Christians, and even as Christian ministers, is strikingly exhibited in the following incident :—The Rev. Rowland Hill had been requested by a Baptist Church to preach for them on the occasion of a special collection being taken up. At the close of the service, it being communion Sunday, Mr. Hill sat down to partake with them. As the church practised what is called close communion, the officers felt themselves to be in rather an awkward situation ; but at length one of them went to Mr. Hill, and said, “ Sir,

A reply to this work was published by two Baptist preachers, named Paul and Kiffen, who found it much easier to revile their opponent than to answer his arguments. Bunyan immediately got up a rejoinder, entitled, "Differences in Judgment about Water Baptism no Bar to Communion," &c. In the preface he informs the reader that the discussion was not one of his seeking, but that he was compelled to engage in it in self-defence. He says, "I had not set pen to paper about this controversy, had we been let alone in our Christian communion. But being assaulted for more than sixteen years, wherein the brethren of the baptized way, as they had the opportunity, have sought to break us in pieces, merely because we are not, in their way, all baptized first; I could not, I durst not, forbear to do a little, if it might be to settle the brethren, and to arm them against the attempts which also of late they began to revive upon us. That I deny the ordinance of baptism, or that I have placed one piece of an argument against it, though they feign it, is quite without colour of truth. All I say is, that the church of Christ hath not warrant to keep out of their communion the Christian that walketh according to his light you cannot sit at our table." "Indeed," replied he, "I thought it had been the *Lord's* table,"

with God. I will not make reflections upon those unhandsome brands that my brethren have laid upon me for this, as, I am a Machiavelian, a man devilish, proud, insolent, presumptuous, and the like ; neither will I say, as they, ‘ The Lord rebuke thee ;’ words fitter to be spoken to the devil than a brother. . . . What Mr. Kiffen hath done in the matter I forgive, and love him never the worse ; but must stand by my principles, because they are peaceable, godly, profitable, and such as tend to the edification of my brother, and, as I believe, will be justified in the day of judgment.”

· He then goes on to point out their misrepresentations of his doctrine, and the irrelevancy of many of their arguments, vindicates further his own practice, and shows that theirs tends to produce dissensions and divisions among Christians. One of them had affirmed that gospel believers were known by water baptism, as gentlemen’s servants were known by their livery. This comparison, replied Bunyan, “ is fantastical. Go but ten doors from where men have knowledge of you, and see how many of the world, or Christians, will know you by this goodly livery to be one that hath put on Christ. What ! known by water baptism to be one that hath put on Christ, as a gentleman’s man is

known to be his master's servant by the gay garment his master gave him ! Away, fond man, you do quite forget the text : ' By *this* shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye LOVE ONE ANOTHER.' "

Mr. Paul, backed by several others, came again to the attack, more abusive than before. " They fell in might and main upon me," says Bunyan ; " some comparing me to the devil, others to a bedlam, others to a sot, and the like, for my seeking peace and truth among the godly." He wrote in reply his " Peaceable Principles and True ; or a brief answer to Mr. Danvers' and Mr. Paul's books, &c., where their Scriptureless motives are overthrown, and my peaceable principles still maintained." This seems to have been his last publication on this subject. Throughout the whole controversy he excelled his opponents as much in temper as in argument ; for though he is sometimes severe, he never exhibits anything like malice or personal feeling. " Railing for railing," he says, " I will not answer, though one of these opposers (Mr. Dan by name) did tell me, that Mr. Paul's reply, when it came out, would sufficiently provoke me to so beastly a work : but what is the reason of his so writing, if not the peevishness of his own spirit, or the want of

better matter? This I thank God for, that some of the brethren of this way are of late more moderate than formerly; and that those that retain their former sourness still, are left by the brethren to the vinegar of their own spirits; their brethren ingenuously confessing, that could those of their company bear it, they have liberty in their own souls to communicate with saints as saints, though they differ about water baptism. Well, God banish bitterness out of the churches, and pardon them that are maintainers of schisms and divisions among the godly. ‘Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity,’ &c. . . . I was advised by some, who considered the wise man’s proverb, not to let Mr. Paul pass with all his bitter invectives; but I considered that ‘the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God;’ therefore I shall leave him to the censure and rebuke of the sober, where I doubt not but his unsavoury ways with me will be seasonably brought to his remembrance. Farewell.”

He then closes his work with the following singular subscription:—“I am thine to serve thee, Christian, so long as I can look out at these two eyes that have had so much dirt thrown at them by many.

JOHN BUNYAN.”

CHAPTER XIV.

CHARACTER OF BUNYAN'S PREACHING, WITH
EXTRACTS FROM HIS SERMONS.

BUNYAN'S labours as a preacher were by no means confined to Bedford and its immediate vicinity. It was his custom, two or three times a year, to take an extensive tour in "the region round about;" and not a few of the Baptist Churches in Bedfordshire, and the adjoining counties of Cambridge, Hertford, Buckingham, and Northampton, trace their origin to his itinerant labours. These periodical visitations occasioned some jeeringly to call him *Bishop Bunyan*; but though applied to him in ridicule, he had a far more Scriptural right to this title than had many of the "downy doctors" by whom it was then borne.

It appears too that from the period of his release he paid an annual visit to London, and preached among the congregations of the non-conformists, where, as Doe tells us, "he used his talents to the great good-liking of his hearers; and even some to whom he had been misrepresented, upon the account of his [want of] education, were convinced of his worth and

knowledge in sacred things, as perceiving him to be a man of sound judgment, delivering himself plainly and powerfully; insomuch that many who came spectators for novelty, rather than to be edified and improved, went away well satisfied with what they heard; and wondered, as the Jews did at our Lord, namely, Whence this man should have these things; perhaps not considering that God more immediately assists those that make it their business industriously and cheerfully to labour in his vineyard."

His usual place of preaching, when in London, was a meeting-house in Zoar-street, Southwark,* which, however, so great was his reputation, would not contain half the people that came to hear him, if but a day's notice was given. His friend, Charles Doe, says, "I have

* About the commencement of the present century, this meeting-house, after having been closed for twenty-one years, was converted into a wheelwright's shop, for which purpose it was still used so late as 1821, at which time, a person who visited it says, "A part of the gallery yet remains, with the same wooden pegs still sticking in its front which once held the uncouth hats of those whom the gallant cavaliers of a former period pointed out to public contempt under the designation of 'round heads,' and 'puritans.' . . . A small portion of this edifice is employed for the instruction of children. The entrance to this school once formed the side entrance to the meeting-

seen, by my computation, about twelve hundred persons to hear him at a morning lecture, on a



house." It has since been pulled down. The pulpit, of which our engraving (copied from the *London Mirror*, vol. xxxvi) is an accurate representation, was removed to a chapel in Palace Yard, Lambeth, where it is preserved as a treasured relic of the extraordinary man who had so often expounded from it the word of life.

working day, in dark winter time. I also computed about three thousand that came to hear him at a town's-end meeting-house ; so that half were fain to go back again for want of room : and then himself was fain at a back door to be pulled almost over the people to get up stairs to the pulpit." In the midst of all this popularity he was humble and modest in his deportment ; and his conduct was as irreproachable as his manners were unassuming.

The celebrated Dr. Owen, who appears to have been a personal friend of Bunyan's,* sometimes formed one of his London auditors. It is said that the doctor being once asked by Charles II. why so learned a man as he was could sit and hear an illiterate tinker prate, replied, "May it please your majesty, could I possess the tinker's ability for preaching, I would most gladly relinquish all my learning."

In giving account of Bunyan's call to the ministry, we briefly adverted to his qualifications for this work : we purpose in this place to make some further remarks on the character and style of his pulpit exercises, illustrating them by some passages from his printed discourses.

* Dr. Barlow is supposed to have been influenced by Dr. Owen, (who, it is said, had been his tutor,) to lend his aid in procuring Bunyan's release.

His language is always plain and vigorous, free from everything like art or affectation. "His style," observes Dr. Southey, "is a home-spun, not a manufactured one. . . . It is a clear stream of current English—the vernacular of his age; sometimes indeed in its rusticity and coarseness, but always in its plainness and strength. To this natural style Bunyan is in some degree beholden for his general popularity. His language is everywhere level to the most ignorant reader, and to the meanest capacity: there is a homely reality about it; a nursery tale is not more intelligible, in its manner of relation, to a child."

A striking characteristic of his discourses, and indeed of all his writings, is his wonderful command of Scripture phraseology. He had an extraordinary acquaintance with the letter of the Bible, and an admirable facility in its use and application. Not a doctrine, warning, or exhortation, but at every turn he could illustrate or "clench it with a text."

His preaching was eminently practical. Whatever sentiments he might hold about unconditional election, effectual calling, and irresistible grace, he expected believers to show their faith by their *works*. His denunciations of fruitless professors must sometimes have made the ears

of such to tingle. "What do they do in the vineyard? let them work, or get them out; the vineyard must have *labourers* in it. . . . God expecteth fruit; God *calleth* for fruit; yea, God will shortly *come seeking* fruit. Barren fig-tree, dost thou hear? either bear fruit, or go out of the vineyard."*

Much of the time in which he exercised his ministry was characterized by the abounding of ungodliness and profanity, fostered by the example of a licentious court, and unrebuked by a hireling state clergy. "Wickedness like a flood," says Bunyan, "is like to drown our English world; it begins already to be above the tops of the mountains; it has almost swallowed up all; our youth, our middle age, old age, and all, are almost carried away by this flood." This being the case, we cannot wonder that in his preaching he should so often, in the ears of the sleeping sinner, sound an alarm of the final perdition of ungodly men, when the wrath of the

* The practical tone of his ministry so exasperated John Wildman, one of the members of the church, that he charged Bunyan with inducing wives to inform against their husbands. This charge the church investigated in 1680, and found it such a wanton slander on Bunyan and the sisterhood, that they unanimously voted Wildman "an abominable liar," and dealt with him accordingly.—*Philip*.

Almighty shall be revealed against them in flaming fire, at the last day. "Sinner, awake; yea, I say unto thee, awake! Sin lieth at thy door, and God's axe lieth at thy root, and hell-fire is right underneath thee. I say again, Awake! 'Every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire,' . . . Awake! art yet asleep, poor sinner? Let me set the trumpet to thine ear once again. The heavens will shortly be on a burning flame; the earth and the works thereof shall be burned up; and then wicked men shall go into perdition. Dost thou hear this, sinner? Hark again! the sweet morsels of sin will then be fled and gone, and the bitter, burning fruits of them only left. . . . I will yet propound to thee God's ponderous question, and then for this time leave thee: 'Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the day that I shall deal with thee, saith the Lord?' What sayest thou? wilt thou answer this question now; or wilt thou take time to do it; or wilt thou be desperate, and venture all? And let me put this text in thine ear to keep it open; and so the Lord have mercy upon thee: 'Upon the wicked shall the Lord rain snares, and fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup.'"—*The Strait Gate.*

The following appeals occur in his discourses on the "Jerusalem Sinner," Luke xxiv, 47; and the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Luke xvi, 19-31.

"Hast thou not reason? Canst thou not so much as once soberly think of thy dying hour? or of whither thy sinful life will drive thee then? Hast thou no conscience? or having one, is it rocked so fast asleep by sin, or made so weary by an unsuccessful calling upon thee, that it is laid down and cares for thee no more? Poor man! thy state is to be lamented. Hast no judgment? Art not able to conclude that to be saved is better than to burn in hell; and that eternal life, with God's favour, is better than temporal life in God's displeasure? Hast no affection but what is brutish? what, none at all? no affection for the God that made thee? none for his loving Son that has showed his love, and died for thee? Is not heaven worth thy affection? O, poor man! which is strongest, thinkest thou, God or thee? If thou art not able to overcome him, thou art a fool for standing out against him. 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' He will gripe hard; his fist is stronger than a lion's paw; take heed of him, he will be angry if you despise his Son; and will you stand guilty in your

trespasses, when he offereth you his grace and favour?"

"Consider thus with thyself: Would I be glad to have all, every one of my sins, to come in against me, to inflame the justice of God against me? Would I be glad to be bound up in them, as the three children were bound in their clothes, and to be as really thrown into the fiery furnace of the wrath of almighty God, as they were into Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace? Would I be glad to have all and every one of the ten commandments to *discharge* themselves against my soul,—the first saying, 'Damn him, for he hath broken me;' the second saying, 'Damn him, for he hath broken me?' &c. Consider how terrible this will be; yea, more terrible than if thou shouldst have ten of the biggest pieces of ordnance in England to be discharged against thy body, thunder, thunder, one after another! Nay, this would not be comparable to the *reports* that the law (for the breach thereof) will give against thy soul; for those can but kill the body, but these will keep both body and soul; and that not for an hour, a day, a month, or a year, but they will condemn thee for ever.

"Mark, it is *for ever*, FOR EVER. It is into *everlasting* damnation, *eternal* destruction, *eter-*

nal wrath and displeasure from God, *eternal* gnawings of conscience, *eternal* continuance with devils. . . . If it were but for a time, even ten thousand years, there would be ground of comfort, and hopes of deliverance ; but here is thy misery,—this is thy state *for ever*, here thou must be *for ever*. When thou lookest about thee, and seest what an innumerable company of howling devils thou art amongst, thou shalt think this again,—this is my portion *for ever*. When thou hast been in hell so many thousand years as there are stars in the firmament, or drops in the sea, or sands on the sea-shore, yet art thou to lie there for ever. O ! this one word, EVER, how will it torment thy soul !”

“Consider and regard these things, and lay them to thy heart, before it be too late. O ! I say, regard, regard, for hell is hot. God’s hand is up ! The Law is resolved to *discharge* against thy soul ! The judgment day is at hand ! The graves are ready to fly open ! The trumpet is near the sounding ! The sentence will ere long be past, and then you and I cannot call time again.”

“Friends, I have given you but a short touch of the torments of hell. O ! I am set, I am *set*, and am not able to utter what my mind conceives of the torments of hell ! Yet this let me say to

thee, Accept of God's mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ, lest thou feel that with thy conscience which I cannot express with my tongue, and say, 'I am sorely tormented in this flame.'"

Here is a counterpart to the above ; for Bunyan delighted to encourage the people of God, as well as felt it his duty to "warn the wicked." He was a Barnabas as well as a Boanerges.

"Consider what a happy state thou art in, that hast gotten the faith of the Lord Jesus into thy soul. (But be sure thou have it.) I say, how safe, how sure, how happy art thou ! For when others go to hell, thou must go to heaven ; when others go to the devil, thou must go to God ; when others go to prison, thou must be set at liberty, at ease, and at freedom ; when others must roar for sorrow of heart, thou shalt sing for joy of heart.

"Consider, thou must have all thy well-spent life to follow thee, instead of all thy sins ; and the glorious blessings of the gospel, instead of the dreadful curses and condemnations of the law ; the blessings of the Father, instead of a fiery sentence from the Judge.

"Let dissolution come when it will, it can do thee no harm ; for it will be only a passage out of a prison into a palace ; out of a sea of troubles into an haven of rest ; out of a cloud of

enemies, to an innumerable company of true and faithful friends ; out of shame, reproach, and contempt, into exceeding great and eternal glory. For death shall not hurt thee with his sting ; nor bite thee with his soul-murdering teeth ; but shall be a welcome guest to thee, even to thy soul, in that it is sent to free thee from thy troubles which thou art in whilst here in this world, dwelling in a tabernacle of clay. . . . Therefore let this cause thee cheerfully to exercise thy patience under all the calamities, crosses, troubles, and afflictions that may come upon thee ; and by patient continuance in well-doing, to commit both thyself, and thine affairs and actions, into the hands of God, through Jesus Christ, as to a faithful Creator, who is true to his word, and loveth to give unto thee what he hath promised thee."

The power and effect with which he "wielded the terrors of the Lord" in his preaching are thus recorded by one who knew him well, and who wrote an elegy on his death :—

"When for conviction on the law he fell,
You'd think you heard the damned's groans in hell ;
And then, almost at every word he spake,
Men's lips would quiver, and their hearts would ache !"

Nor was he less successful as a "son of consolation." His friend, Charles Doe, says, "Thou-

sands of Christians, in country and town, can testify that their comforts under his ministry have been to an admiration, so that their joy showed itself by much weeping.”*

The following passage from “The Heavenly Footman” is quoted with approbation by Southey, who observes that it is “in Bishop Latimer’s vein,” an opinion which will be concurred in by every one at all acquainted with the sermons of that distinguished reformer and martyr. “They that would have heaven must run for it, because the devil, the law, sin, death, and hell, follow them. There is never a poor soul that is going to heaven, but the devil, the law, sin, death, and hell, make after that soul. ‘The devil, your adversary, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour.’ And I will assure you, the devil is nimble, he can run apace, he is light of foot, he hath overtaken many, he hath turned up their heels, and hath given them an everlasting fall. Also the Law, *that* can shoot a great way; have a care thou keep out of the

* Another contemporary and biographer of Bunyan says of his preaching: “He laid open before men the saving promises and dreadful denunciations of the Scripture, and sent it so *home*, that it not only created joy but trembling; each one on their departure confessing that their hearts were moved at his words.”

reach of those great guns, the ten commandments. Hell also hath a wide mouth; it can stretch itself further than you are aware of. And as the angel said to Lot, 'Take heed, look not behind thee, neither tarry thou in all the plain, (that is, anywhere between this and heaven,) lest thou be consumed;' so say I to thee, Take heed, tarry not, lest either the devil, hell, death, or the fearful curses of the law of God, do overtake thee, and throw thee in the midst of thy sins, so as never to rise and recover again. If this were well considered, then thou, as well as I, wouldst say, 'They that will have heaven must run for it.'

"But if thou wouldst so run as to obtain the kingdom of heaven, then be sure that thou get into the way that leadeth thither; for it is a vain thing to think that ever thou shalt have the prize, though thou runnest never so fast, unless thou art in the way that leads to it. Set the case, that there should be a man in London that was to run to York for a wager: now, though he run never so swiftly, yet if he run full south, he might run himself quickly out of breath, and be never the nearer the prize, but rather the further off. Just so it is here; it is not simply the runner, nor yet the hasty runner, that winneth the crown, unless he be in the way that leadeth

thereto. I have observed, that little time which I have been a professor, that there is a great running to and fro, some this way, and some that way ; yet it is to be feared most of them are out of the way, and then, though they run as swift as the eagle can fly, they are benefited nothing at all. . . . If now thou ask, ‘ Which is the way ? ’ I tell thee, it is CHRIST, the Son of Mary, the Son of God. Jesus saith, ‘ I am the way, the truth, and the life ; no man cometh to the Father, but by me. ’ ”* To sermons in such a strain, adds Mr. Southey, however hearers might differ in taste and in opinion, there are none who would not listen.

Bunyan’s vividness of imagination, and power of expression, enabled him to give almost life and reality to some of his descriptions. Take for instance the following, from “ The Barren Fig-tree,” (a discourse on Luke, xiii, 6–9,) which is the last passage we shall quote. The preacher is describing the doom of the fruitless professor.

“ God comes the third year, as he did before ; but still he finds but a barren fig-tree ; no fruit.

* “ The Heavenly Footman ; or a Description of the Man that gets to Heaven ; together with the way he runs in, the marks he goes by ; and also some directions how to run so as to obtain : ” a discourse on 1 Cor. ix, 24.

Now he cries out again, ‘O thou dresser of my vineyard, come hither ; here is a fig-tree hath stood these three years in my vineyard, and hath at every season disappointed my expectation. Cut it down ; my patience is worn out ; I shall wait on this fig-tree no longer.’

“And now he begins to shake the fig-tree with his threatenings. ‘Fetch out the axe.’ Now the axe is death. Death therefore is called for: ‘Death, come smite me this fig-tree.’ And withal the Lord shakes this sinner, and whirls him upon a sick bed, saying, ‘Take him, Death ; he hath abused my patience and forbearance, not remembering that it should have led him to repentance and the fruits thereof. Death, fetch away this fig-tree to the fire ; fetch this barren professor to hell.’ At this Death comes with grim looks to the chamber, and Hell follows him to the bed-side ; and both stare this professor in the face ; yea, begin to lay hands upon him, one smiting him with pains in his body, with headache, heartache, backache, shortness of breath, trembling at joints, stopping at the chest, and almost all the symptoms of a man past recovery. Now while Death is thus tormenting the body, Hell is doing with the mind and conscience, casting sparks of fire in thither ; wounding with sorrows, and fears of everlasting

damnation, the spirit of this poor creature. And now he begins to bethink himself, and cry to God for mercy: 'Lord, spare me! Lord, spare me!' 'Nay,' saith God, 'you have been a provocation to me these three years. How many times have you disappointed me? How many seasons have you spent in vain? How many sermons and other mercies did I of my patience afford you? but to no purpose at all. Take him, Death.' 'O Lord God,' saith the sinner, 'spare me but this once; raise me but this once! Indeed, I have been but a barren professor, and have stood to no purpose at all in thy vineyard; but spare! O spare this one time, I beseech thee, and I will be better.' 'Away, away, you will not; I have tried you these three years already; you are naught; if I should recover you again you would be as bad as you were before.' (And all this talk is while Death stands by.) The sinner cries again, 'Good Lord, try me this once; let me get up again this once, and see if I do not mend.' 'But will you promise me to mend?' 'Yes indeed, Lord, and *vow* it too; I will never be so bad again; I *will* be better.' 'Well,' saith God, 'Death, let this professor alone for this time; I will try him awhile longer; he hath promised, he hath vowed, that he will mend his ways. It may be he will mind

to keep his promises. Vows are solemn things; it may be he will fear to break his vows. Arise from off thy bed!’

“And now God lays down his axe. At this the poor creature is very thankful; praises God, and fawns upon him; shows as if he did it heartily; and calls to others to thank him too. He therefore riseth, as one would think, to be a new creature indeed. But by that he hath put on his clothes, is come down from his bed, and ventured into the yard or shop, and there sees how all things are gone to sixes and sevens, he begins to have second thoughts, and says to his folks, ‘What have you all been doing? How are all things out of order? I am, I cannot tell what behind. One may see if a man be put a little to a side, that you have neither wisdom nor prudence to order things.’ And now, instead of seeking to spend the rest of his time to God, he doubleth his diligence after this world. ‘Alas!’ he saith, ‘all must not be lost; we must have provident care.’ And thus, quite forgetting the sorrows of death, the pains of hell, the promises and vows he made to God to be better, because judgment was not speedily executed, therefore the heart of this poor creature is fully set in him to do evil.

“These things proving ineffectual, God takes

hold of his axe again, and sends Death to a wife, to a child, to his cattle. At this the poor barren professor cries out again, 'Lord, I have sinned; spare me once more, I beseech thee. O take not away the desire of mine eyes; spare my children; bless me in my labours, and I will be better.' 'No,' saith God, 'you lied to me the last time; I will trust you in this no longer:' and withal he tumbleth the wife, the child, the estate, into a grave.

"At this the poor creature is afflicted and distressed; rends his clothes, and begins to call the breaking of his promise and vows to mind; he mourns, and, like Ahab, awhile walks softly at the remembrance of the justice of the hand of God upon him. And now he renews his promises: 'Lord, try me this one time more; take off thy hand and see; they go far that never turn.' Well, God spareth him again; sets down his axe again. . . . But, alas! there is yet no fruit on this fig-tree.

"Well, now the axe begins to be heaved higher, for now indeed God is ready to smite the sinner. Yet before he will strike the stroke, he will try one way more at last, and if that misseth, down goes the fig-tree. Now this way is to tug and strive with this professor by his Spirit. . . . But behold, the mischief now lies

here,—there is tugging on both sides. The Spirit convinces; the man turns a deaf ear to God. The Spirit saith, ‘Receive my instruction and live;’ but the man pulls away his shoulder. The Spirit shows him whither he is going; but the man closeth his eyes against it. The Spirit offereth violence, but the man strives and resists. The Spirit parleyeth the second time, and urgeth reasons of a new nature; but the sinner answereth, ‘No, I have loved strangers, and after them I will go.’ At this *God’s fury comes up into his face*; now he comes out of his holy place, and is terrible; now he sweareth in his wrath, they shall never enter into his rest. ‘I exercised toward you my patience, yet you have not turned unto me,’ saith the Lord; ‘I smote you in your person, in your relations, in your estate, yet you have not returned unto me. In thy filthiness is lewdness, because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged; thou shalt not be purged any more till I cause my fury to rest upon thee: ‘Cut it down; why doth it cumber the ground?’”

Sermons in this style, delivered with the energy and holy fervour which characterized Bunyan’s preaching, could not fail to *tell* upon the hearts and consciences of his hearers, and fully account for the popularity and success of

his ministry, especially as his teaching was enforced by the example of a holy life ; for

“He in the *pulpit* preach’d truth first, and then
He in his *practice* preach’d it o’er again.”

When his new meeting-house was built, we are told that “the first time he appeared there to edify, the place was so thronged that many were constrained to stay without, though the house was very spacious, every one striving to partake of his instructions, that were of his persuasion, and show their good will toward him by being present at the opening of the place.”—*Doe’s Continuation*.

“He was also very useful as an elder or pastor : first by his example, he being full of zeal and affection at all times, according to knowledge ; more especially at the administration of the Lord’s supper, it was observable that tears flowed from his eyes in abundance, from his sense of the sufferings of Christ, that are in that ordinance shadowed forth. He was useful also by the accuracy of his knowledge of church discipline, and readiness to put that into practice in the church, as occasion offered, which he saw was agreeable to the word of God, whether admonition, or edification, or making up of differences, or filling up vacancies, or paring off excrescences. . . . When he saw cause of re-

proof, he did not spare for outward circumstances, whether in the pulpit or not; and was ready to administer comfort and succour to the tempted. A 'son of consolation' to the broken hearted and afflicted, yet a 'son of thunder' to secure and dead sinners."*

"He took great care to visit the sick, and strengthen them against the suggestions of the tempter, which at such times are very prevalent; so that they had cause for ever to bless God, who had put it into his head at such a time to rescue them from the power of the roaring lion who sought to devour them.

"He managed his affairs with such exactness as if he had made it his study, above all other things, not to give occasion of offence, but rather to suffer many inconveniences to avoid it; being never heard to reproach or revile any, what injury soever he received, but rather to rebuke those that did.

"In his own family he kept very strict discipline, in prayer and exhortation; being in this, like Joshua, resolved that whatsoever others

* Chandler and Wilson, in the introduction to their edition of his works. The former was Bunyan's successor in the pastorate at Bedford; Wilson was a member of Bunyan's church, from which he was sent out to take the oversight of a neighbouring Baptist Church.

did, as for him and his house, he would serve the Lord.”—*Doe's Continuation*.

His devotedness as a preacher and pastor, his singleness of heart, and the disinterested zeal with which he laboured to promote their best interests, justly endeared him to the members of his flock. “It is delightful,” observes Mr. Philip, “to read the respectful and affectionate terms in which Bunyan is mentioned in the minutes of the church meetings.”

He was sometimes encountered by scholars, who came to oppose him, thinking him an ignorant man. He once “nonplused” a Cambridge student, who, overtaking him on the road, asked how he “dared to preach,” being an unlearned man, and not having the *original* Scriptures? “Have *you* the original?” returned Bunyan. “Yes,” replied the scholar. “Nay, but have you the very *self-same* copies that were written by the penmen of them?” “No, but we have true copies of them.” “How do you *know* that?” “How,” said the scholar, “why we believe what we have is a true copy of the original.” “Then,” replied Bunyan, “so do I believe our English Bible to be a *true* copy of the original.” So away rode the scholar, adds Mr. Doe, who gives the relation.

As it may appear strange to some, that while

such severe laws were in force against all dissenters from the state Church, Bunyan should now be allowed to exercise his ministry apparently without molestation, it may be well to remark, that it was seldom that persecution raged in all parts of the country at the same time ; that in most places the force of public opinion was against those laws ; and that their enforcement in any place depended much on the character of the established clergy, and the magistracy in the neighbourhood. Occasionally, too, the dominant party were influenced, by motives of policy, to relax somewhat of their high-handed rigour.

CHAPTER XV.

PUBLICATION OF THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS :
NOTICES OF THAT WORK.

NOTWITHSTANDING his almost unremitting labours as a preacher, a pastor, and an evangelist, Bunyan still found means to devote some time to the productions of his pen. In 1675 he published a treatise on "Election and Reprobation;" a work on redemption by Christ, entitled, "Light for them that sit in Darkness;" "Instruction for the Ignorant," being a plain exposition of the leading principles of our holy religion, in the form of questions and answers; and "Christian Behaviour, being the Fruits of True Christianity." In the latter work, which is in the form of a discourse on Titus iii, 7, 8, he not only shows the duty of Christians in general to be "careful to maintain good works," but also directs them in their several relations as "husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants, &c., how to walk so as to please God." In the following year he published "A Discourse on the Grace of God;" and another entitled, "The Strait Gate; or the great Difficulty of going to Heaven," a discourse on Matt. vii, 13, 14.

It is not improbable that the substance of some of the above works was written during his imprisonment, as the first part of the "Pilgrim's Progress" is well known to have been, though it was not published until 1677. This wonderful production of genius was written by its author to solace the hours of his confinement, and without any reference to its future publication. The idea of the work suddenly occurred to his mind, or, to use one of his own expressions, "bolted in upon him," while he was occupied in the preparation of another book : but the story is best told in the following extract from "The Author's Apology for his Book :"—

"When at the first I took my pen in hand,
Thus for to write, I did not understand
That I at all should make a little book
In such a mode ; nay, I had undertook
To make another, which, when almost done,
Before I was aware, I this begun.

"And thus it was : I, writing of the way
And race of saints in this our gospel day,
Fell suddenly into an allegory
About their journey, and the way to glory,
In more than twenty things, which I set down :
This done, I twenty more had in my crown ;
And they again began to multiply
Like sparks that from the coals of fire do fly.
Nay then, thought I, if that you breed so fast,
I'll put you by yourselves, lest you at last

Should prove *ad infinitum*, and eat out
The book that I already am about.

“ Well, so I did; but yet I did not think
To show to all the world my pen and ink
In such a mode; I only thought to make
I knew not what; nor did I undertake
Thereby to please my neighbour; no, not I;
I did it mine own self to gratify.

“ Neither did I but vacant seasons spend
In this my scribble; nor did I intend
But to divert myself, in doing this,
From worser thoughts, which make me do amiss.

“ Thus I set pen to paper with delight,
And quickly had my thoughts in black and white.
For having now my method by the end,
Still as I pull’d, it came; and so I penn’d
It down; until at last it came to be,
For length and breadth, the bigness which you see.”

After he had completed his allegory, he showed it to some of his friends, to get their judgment respecting its publication; but he found much diversity of opinion among them on that point.

“ Some said, ‘ John, print it;’ others said, ‘ Not so.’
Some said, ‘ It might do good;’ others said, ‘ No.’
Now was I in a strait, and did not see
What was the best thing to be done by me.
At last I thought, since you are thus divided,
I print it will, and so the case decided:

For, thought I, some I see would have it done,
Though others in that channel do not run ;
To prove, then, who advised for the best,
Thus I thought fit to put it to the test."

It is not unlikely that the conflicting opinions of those whom he consulted in reference to its publication were the principal cause of Bunyan's keeping the manuscript so long before he sent it to the press.

Such then was the origin of the Pilgrim's Progress, a book which, though written by an unlettered man, and under the most discouraging circumstances, has exercised, and continues to exercise, "more influence over minds of every class, than the most refined and sublime genius, with all the advantages of education and good fortune, has been able to rival, in this respect, since its publication. / Indeed, it would be difficult to name another work of any kind, in our native tongue, of which so many editions have been printed ; of which so many readers have lived and died, the character of whose lives and deaths must have been more or less affected by its lessons and examples, its fictions and realities."*

The Pilgrim's Progress is not purely either an allegory or a narrative, but a pleasing mix-

* Montgomery's Introd. Essay to the Pilgrim's Progress.

ture of both, "under the similitude of a dream."* Christian, the hero of the story, journeys from the City of Destruction to the heavenly country, and as we follow with unwearied interest his various adventures from "the Slough of Despond, from which he could not get out by reason of the burden which was upon his back," to the river of Death, where Hopeful says to him, "Be of good cheer, my brother, I feel the bottom, and it is good," we find portrayed in a most life-like manner the difficulties and distresses, the helps, consolations, and encouragements which every disciple is like to meet with in the course of his Christian pilgrimage. "It describes every stage of the believer's experience, from conversion to glorification, in the most artless simplicity of language; yet peculiarly rich with spiritual unction, and glowing with the most vivid, just, and well-conducted

* It is observed in Mr. Oldys's MSS. that the Pilgrim's Progress was so acceptable to the common people, by reason of the amusing and parabolic manner of its composition, by way of vision, a method he was thought to have such an extraordinary knack in, that some thought there were communications made to him in dreams, and that he first really dreamt over the matter contained in such of his writings. This notion was not a little propagated by his picture before some of those books, which is represented in a sleeping posture.—*Biog. Brit.*

machinery throughout. It is, in short, a master-piece of piety and genius ; and will, we doubt not, be of standing use to the people of God so long as the sun and moon endure."

Bunyan evidently had his own religious experience in his mind while penning the progress of his Pilgrim. Indeed he says, in one of his rhyming prefaces,—

"It came *from mine own heart*, so to my head," &c.

This fact will appear also by a comparison of some passages from his Pilgrim, with others from his Grace Abounding.

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

"And as he read he wept and trembled ; and not being able longer to contain, he brake out with a lamentable cry, saying, 'What shall I do?'"

"Now I saw in my dream that they drew nigh to a very *miry* slough ; and they, being heedless, did both fall suddenly into the *bog*. Here therefore they wallowed for a time, being grievously bedaubed with dirt," &c.

"*Hopeful*. I did not see him with my bodily eyes,

GRACE ABOUNDING.

"Then breaking out in the bitterness of my soul, I said to my soul, with a grievous sigh, 'How can God comfort such a wretch as I am ?'"

"O how cautiously did I then go, in all I said or did ! I found myself in a *miry bog*, that shook if I did but stir, and was as there left both of God and Christ, and the Spirit, and all good things."

"One day, when I was in a meeting house of God's

but with the eyes of *my understanding*. And thus it was: One day I was very *sad*, I think sadder than at any one time in my life; and this *sadness* was through a fresh sight of the greatness and vileness of my sins. And as I was looking for nothing but hell and the everlasting damnation of my soul, *suddenly*, as *I thought, I saw the Lord Jesus look down from heaven upon me*, and saying, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' But I replied, 'Lord, I am a great, a very great sinner;' and he answered, '*My grace is sufficient for thee.*' "

people, full of *sadness* and terror, for my fears again were strong upon me, and as I was now thinking my soul was never the better, but my case most *sad* and fearful, these words did with great power *suddenly* break in upon me, three times together, '*My grace is sufficient for thee,*' my grace is sufficient for thee, my grace is sufficient for thee; at which time *my understanding* was so enlightened, that I was *as though I had seen the Lord Jesus look down from heaven*, through the tiles, *upon me*, and direct these words unto me."

See also pages 14 and 68 of the present work.

Of the *first* edition of the Pilgrim, which appeared in 1677, no copy is now known to be extant. A copy of the *second* is in the British Museum; it is "with additions," and was "Printed for Nath. Ponder, at the Peacock in the Poultney, near Cornhill, 1678."* The *fourth*

* In this edition the poetical "Apology" occupies nine pages, and the body of the work two hundred and se-

edition, also "with additions," was published in 1679, and the *fifth* in 1680.

The earliest edition Dr. Southey was able to procure was the *eighth*, printed in 1682. On comparing this with the old copy in the museum, referred to above, he found that the whole scene between By-ends and his three friends, and their subsequent discourse with Christian and Faithful, making several pages, had been added since the second edition. This he thinks was probably first inserted in the *fourth* edition, which is stated (in an advertisement inserted in the eighth) to have "had many additions more than any preceding." The eighth edition also bears on its title the words, "with additions;" but there is no reason, Dr. Southey thinks, to suppose they were "new ones never made before," for the *ninth*, published in 1684, and the *tenth*, in 1685, bear the same promise, but contain no alteration whatever. It is certain that no additions have been made since the eighth edition.

It appears that cuts were first introduced in the *fifth* edition; for in a notice printed on the back of the frontispiece to the eighth, it is stated

venty-six. The copy above noticed has bound up with it the Old Memoir, (already referred to,) entitled, an "Account of Bunyan's Life and Actions, with his Elegy, printed in 1692," and occupying forty-four pages.

that “the publishers, observing that many persons desired to have it illustrated with pictures, hath endeavoured to gratify them therein: and besides those that are ordinarily printed to the fifth impression, hath provided thirteen copper cuts, curiously engraven, for such as desire them.”*

All that is said above, it must be remembered, refers to the *First Part* of Bunyan’s great work. In the lines at the close of that he hints at the possibility of his dreaming “yet another dream.” It was this probably, in connection with the great popularity of the *Pilgrim*, that induced some dishonest imitators to endeavour to palm off their own trash as the genuine productions of Bunyan, who says,—

——— “Some have of late to counterfeit
My *Pilgrim*, to their own my title set;
Yea, others, half my name† and title too,
Have stitch’d to their books, to make them do.”

Of these imitations Dr. Southey says, “Only one of them has fallen in my way—for it is by

* A writer in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* for September, 1843, states that the second and third editions had a single cut, representing the author dreaming.

† This deception was probably executed thus: “Jo. Bun.,” according to a vicious practice of contracting signatures which prevailed through almost the whole of the seventeenth century.—*Philip*.

accident only that books of this perishable kind, which have no merit of their own to preserve them, are to be met with: and this, though entitled the 'Second Part of the Pilgrim's Progress,' has no other relation to the first than its title, which was probably a trick of the publishers."

In 1684 Bunyan published the Second Part of his Pilgrim, "wherein is set forth the manner of the setting out of Christian's wife and children; their dangerous journey, and safe arrival at the desired country." On the back of the title-page appeared the following notice:—"I appoint Mr. Nathaniel Ponder, but no other, to print this book, John Bunyan, January 1, 1684."

If the Second Part does not excite so intense an interest as the First, it is not less delightful. It is even richer in incident; and the author has shown the fertility of his invention in the novelty which he has thrown in this second journey. There is also a pleasure in travelling with another company over the same ground; a pleasure arising from the combined effect of reminiscence and contrast, and which is inferior neither in kind nor degree to that which is derived from a first impression. The author evidently felt this, and we are indebted to it for some beautiful passages of repose.* Such, for

* Conder's Life of Bunyan. Southey's do.

instance, is the description of the Valley of Humiliation : " Though nothing can be more quiet and unobtruding, there is a sacredness and solemnity of contemplative feeling awakened, which makes the reader tread as on holy ground. The repose and sweetness of the scene, the shepherd's boy and his song, the allusion to our Lord himself having formerly (when he was a pilgrim on earth) loved much to be there—all these touching associations, while they soothe and tranquillize the soul, fit it for prayer, meditation, and such discourse as Christiana and her company held in passing through the valley. The guide's exposition of Christian's terrible encounter with Apollyon is an admirable commentary on that mysterious passage. Nothing can be more essentially poetic than this stage of Christiana's journey. That our author's temperament was constitutionally poetical, innumerable passages in all his writings prove, where the most felicitous phrases, the loftiest conceptions, and the most splendid metaphors, (unconsciously to himself,) flash out amidst the ordinary matter of his prose ; yet whenever he attempts verse,—fire, fancy, feeling, all forsake him ; and throughout his numerous metrical compositions there will scarcely be found a hundred lines that deserve the name of poetry.

His best production of this kind is the song, put into the mouth of Valiant-for-the-truth, toward the close of this Second Part, having the burden—

‘To be a pilgrim.’

“There is an extraordinary variety of characters brought into appropriate action, and exposed to peculiar suffering, in this section of the Pilgrim’s Progress. . . . In the pilgrimage of Christian and his successive companions, Faithful and Hopeful, he portrayed personal and solitary experience, or only bosom-fellowship between believers. In the journey of Christiana and her family, gradually increasing to a goodly troop, he seems to have had more in view to illustrate the communion of saints and the advantages of church membership. Though each individual is strikingly dissimilar from all the rest, they harmoniously agree to walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing. It is delightful to travel in such a company, and hear them not only tell their several histories, but discourse of the adventures of others who have gone before ; so that to the last stage in the enchanted ground, when they find Stand-fast on his knees, there is a perpetual change of captivating anecdote and biography.”—*Montgomery*.

No additions or alterations were made in the

Second Part, though the author lived more than four years after its publication.

Before the Second Part made its appearance, the First had not only acquired an extensive circulation in Great Britain, and in the colony of New-England, (whither it was carried by the Puritan emigrants,) but had also been translated into French and Dutch. To these facts the author refers with honest gratification in the introduction to the Second Part :—

“In France and Flanders, where men kill each other,
My Pilgrim is esteem'd a friend, a brother.
In Holland, too, 'tis said, as I am told,
My Pilgrim is with some worth more than gold.
Highlanders and wild Irish can agree
My Pilgrim should familiar with them be.
'Tis in New-England under such advance,
Receives there so much loving countenance,
As to be trimm'd, new clothed, and deck'd with gems,
That it might show its features and its limbs.
Yet more ; so comely doth my Pilgrim walk,
That of him thousands daily sing and talk.
The very children that do walk the street,
If they do but my holy Pilgrim meet,
Salute him will, will wish him well, and say,
He is the only stripling of the day.”

From the closing paragraphs of the Second Part, it seems that the author contemplated a third, which should give a further account of

the pilgrimage of Christiana's children ; but this never appeared. An anonymous work, called the Third Part of the Pilgrim's Progress, and containing the adventures of one Tender Conscience, was published in 1693, and has had the honour to be inserted in some editions of Bunyan's matchless parable ; but this, though by no means destitute of merit, is as inferior to Bunyan as it is unlike him. The name of its author is unknown.

Laboured attempts have been made to deprive Bunyan of the credit of originality in his great work, and various productions of former times have been suggested as having furnished him with the idea and general plan of his allegory ; but a careful examination of these works has shown that they are so dissimilar in character, that Bunyan, *if he ever saw them*, (which respecting some is more than doubtful,) could have drawn from them little or nothing more than a hint for the name of his book,—the words “pilgrim,” and “pilgrimage,” occurring in the titles of some of them ; even this it is much more likely he drew from the Bible. See note on p. 333.

Even in his own day there were not wanting those whose envy of his merits, or contempt of his abilities, prompted them to charge him with plagiarism—an imputation which he indignantly

repels in the homely rhymes prefixed to his Holy War.

“Some say the Pilgrim’s Progress is not mine,
Insinuating as if I would shine
In name and fame by the worth of another,
Like some made rich by robbing of their brother ;
————— Or that if need require,
I’ll tell a lie in print to get applause.
I scorn it : John such dirt-heap never was,
Since God converted him.”

“It came from mine own heart, so to my head,
And thence into my fingers trickled ;
Then to my pen,” &c.

“Manner and matter too were all mine own ;
Nor was it unto any mortal known
Till I had done it ; nor did any then
By books, by wits, by tongues, or hand, or pen,
Add five words to it, or write half a line
Thereof : the whole and every whit is mine.”

The fifteenth edition of the complete work, containing both parts, was published in 1702 ; the nineteenth, “with the addition of new cuts,” was “Printed for N. Boddington, at the Golden Ball, in Duck Lane, 1718.” In 1767, ninety years after its first publication, it had passed through fifty-four editions.

It is believed there is no European language into which this work has not been translated. It was early printed even in Popish countries, an honour which we presume the author little

anticipated:* in those editions the scene of "Giant Pope" is of course omitted. The following, among others, are found in the catalogue of the British Museum :—

Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, *Arab.* 8° Malta 1830.

Idem *Gall.* 8° Rotterd. 1722.

Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress in the Malagassie, or Madagascar language 16° London, 1838.

Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, *Romaic*, μεταφρασθεισα, παρα Σ.Σ. βιλσωνος. 8° Melita, 1824.

It was printed in Portuguese in 1722. A late number of the Baptist Advocate, (July 13, 1843,) a weekly periodical, published in New-York, states, that it "is now being translated into the Hebrew language, for the benefit of the Jews." It has also been translated into the Armenian language.

It is not known when the Pilgrim's Progress was first reprinted in America. Doe, writing in 1691, only three years after Bunyan's death, tells us it had then been printed in New-England.† A writer in the Christian Review, (vol.

* It is said that a copy of it, in elegant binding, is preserved in the Vatican at Rome.—*Ivimey*.

† He says, it "hath been printed in France, Holland, New-England, and in Welsh; and about a hundred thousand in England."—*Life of Bunyan*.

iv, p. 418,) says, "The earliest American edition we have seen is the *sixteenth*, and is now nearly a century old. It was 'Printed by JOHN DRAPER for CHARLES HARRISON over against the *Brazen Head* in *Cornhil* BOSTON N. E. M,DCCXLIV.' It is adorned with wood-cuts, which, though rude, are expressive." A writer in the Boston Weekly Magazine says he has examined the *seventeenth* edition, printed and published in the same year, and by the same persons. He has also seen a copy of the *fifty-seventh* edition, dated only about twenty or twenty-five years later than the above, and some time before the revolution.

Perhaps no other uninspired book has been so universally popular as the Pilgrim's Progress. The rich vein of native good sense and sober pleasantry that runs through it, recommends it to all orders of readers, and it is read by almost everybody who reads anything. "It commands the admiration of the most fastidious critic, though he may have no sympathy with either its design or spirit; and it is loved by those who are too simple to admire it. It is equally a favourite with young and old: children peruse it with wonder and delight; and their interest in its pages only increases with advancing years." "The very things which are 'milk for

babes,' are actually 'strong meat' to the same persons when they become men. What is admired as *history* in childhood, is admired as *mystery* in youth: what is admired as ingenuity in manhood, is loved as experience in old age. . . . In *childhood* we sit, as it were, on Christian's knee, listening to the tale of his

' Hair-breadth escapes
By flood and field.'

In *youth* we join him upon his perilous journey, to obtain directions for our own intended pilgrimage in the narrow way. Before *manhood* is matured, we know experimentally that the Slough of Despond and Doubting Castle are no fictions. And even in *old age*, Christians are more than ever convinced of the heights, and depths, and breadths, and lengths of Bunyan's spiritual wisdom. The faltering tongue of decrepitude utters, as sage maxims, the very things it had lisped as amusing narrative; and we gravely utter, as *counsel* to the young, what we prattled, as *curious*, to our parents."—*Philip*.

Nor is it possible to conceive a time when it shall cease to be popular. "Amidst all changes of time, and style, and modes of thinking, it has maintained its place in the popular literature of every succeeding age, . . . and it stands among

the perished and perishing intellectual labours of man, in generations past, as one of the few that may now be pronounced imperishable.”* Yes, “that wonderful vision which Bunyan saw—brighter than any other but that seen by him of Patmos—shall be the wonder and delight of lisping infancy, and the joy of hoary age, till the pilgrims all reach the celestial city.”†

It has been so much the fashion for witlings to decry Bunyan’s style as coarse and vulgar, that we cannot refrain from giving, in addition to what has already been said on that subject, the following remarks from an article in the “Edinburgh Review,” written by T. B. Macauley, Esq.:—“The style of Bunyan is delightful to every reader, and invaluable as a study to every person who wishes to obtain a wide command over the English language. The vocabulary is the vocabulary of the common people. There is not an expression, if we except a few technical terms of theology, which would puzzle the modest peasant. We have observed several pages which do not contain a single word of more than two syllables. Yet no writer has said more exactly what he meant to say. For magnificence, for pathos, for vehe-

* Montgomery’s Essay.

† Rev. Dr. Bacon.

ment exhortation, for subtle disquisition, for every purpose of the poet, the orator, and the divine, this homely dialect—the dialect of plain working men—was perfectly sufficient. There is no book in our literature on which we would so readily stake the fame of the unpolluted English language: no book which shows so well how rich that language is in its own proper wealth, and how little it has been improved by all that it has borrowed.”

The same writer observes,—“Cowper said, forty or fifty years ago, that he dared not name John Bunyan in his verse, for fear of moving a sneer. . . . We live in better times; and we are not afraid to say, that though there were many clever men in England during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there were only two great creative minds. One of these minds produced the *Paradise Lost*, the other the *Pilgrim's Progress*.”

CHAPTER XVI.

CALUMNIOUS REPORT: PUBLICATION OF THE
HOLY WAR, LIFE OF BADMAN, ETC.

A DESIRE not to interrupt the account of the Pilgrim's Progress has occasioned a departure from the strict chronological order of our narrative; we must now therefore go back a little to the circumstances that intervened between the publication of the First and Second Parts of that work. During that period (about 1678) an attempt was made to implicate Bunyan in a charge of seduction and murder. A full account of the affair was written by the person chiefly interested, Agnes Beaumont, the daughter of a farmer, near Bedford, who was bitterly prejudiced against Bunyan. The facts of the case are briefly these. This young woman, who was a member of Bunyan's church, had, on a certain occasion, a great desire to attend a church meeting at a place called Gamlingay. "About a week before it," she says, "I was much in prayer, especially for two things: the one, that the Lord would incline the heart of my father to let me go, which he sometimes refused; . . . the other, that the Lord would

go with me, and that I might enjoy his presence there at his table." Her father, though at first unwilling, at length gave her permission, and a Mr. Wilson was to call and take her on his horse behind him. He not calling, she was sadly disappointed, and feared she should lose the opportunity of going, when Mr. Bunyan unexpectedly came along. Her brother asked him to take Agnes with him, which he at first refused to do; but being urged, he at length consented.

When her father heard that she had gone with Bunyan, he was greatly enraged, and started to overtake them, intending to pull his daughter off the horse; but they were then beyond his reach.

"I had not rode far," says Miss Beaumont, "before my heart began to be lifted up with pride at the thoughts of riding behind this servant of the Lord, and was pleased if any looked after us as we rode along. . . . My pride soon had a fall; for in entering Gamlingay we were met by one Mr. Lane, a clergyman who lived at Bedford, and knew us both, and spoke to us, but looked very hard at us as we rode along; and soon after raised a vile scandal upon us, though, blessed be God, it was false."

When she returned from the meeting, (which,

she says, the Lord made a sweet season to her soul,) she found the house locked against her, and her father refused to let her in. Finding it impossible to gain admission, she went to the barn, and continued there all night in prayer, though it was in the midst of winter. In the morning, when her father came to the barn, she entreated him to let her go into the house; but he declared she should never enter it again, unless she promised not to go to meeting again as long as he lived. She followed him about the yard for some time, begging him to relent; but to no purpose, for his anger was only increased. She then went to the house of her brother, who resided within a short distance. This was on Saturday. In the course of that and the following day she went (accompanied either by her brother or sisters) two or three times to her father, but met with no better success. At length, on Sunday evening she promised her father not to go to a meeting again without his consent, on which he gave her the key, and she went into the house, and the old man appeared perfectly reconciled and cheerful.

On Tuesday night she was awaked by a doleful noise proceeding from her father's room. She called to him, asking him if he was not well. He answered, "No; I was struck with

a pain in my heart, in my sleep ; and I shall die presently." Going into the room, she found him sitting upright in his bed, crying to God for mercy. She immediately kindled a fire, and got something warm for him to drink, hoping it would relieve him ; but his trying to drink brought on a violent retching ; he changed black in the face, and soon after fell on the ground, apparently dead. His daughter, greatly alarmed, ran barefooted through the snow to her brother's house, and told him that her father was dead. He, with two of his men, went to his father's, and found him still alive, but unable to speak, except a word or two ; and in a short time he died.

The next day a lawyer, named Farry, set about a report that the old man had been poisoned by his daughter, and that Bunyan had furnished her with the stuff to do it with. Upon this a surgeon was called to examine the body, and an inquest held, when it plainly appeared that the man had died a natural death ; and Farry having nothing to offer in support of his charge, was sharply rebuked by the coroner for thus publicly defaming the character of an innocent female. He, however, afterward revived the calumny at various times ; once giving out that she had herself confessed the crime, and

was quite distracted ; and at another time that Bunyan had advised her to poison her father that he might marry her, and that the plot was agreed on as they rode to Gamlingay. "This last report," she says, "rather occasioned mirth than mourning, because Mr. Bunyan, at the same time, had a good wife living."

The cause of Farry's malignity was this :— He had, three years before, privately marked out Miss Beaumont for his wife ; and having this in view, had persuaded her father, in making his will, to leave the bulk of his property to Agnes. But her piety defeated his purpose. She would not have him because he was ungodly ; and he sought to avenge himself in the manner already stated.*

In 1678 Bunyan published a discourse entitled, "Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ," founded on John vi, 37 ; and another in the following year on "The Fear of God."

His next publication, which appeared in 1682, was "The Holy War, made by Shaddai upon Diabolus, for the regaining of the Metropolis

* Miss Beaumont became a member of Bunyan's church in 1672, and died in 1720, aged sixty-eight years, as appears from a tablet erected to her memory in the Baptist chapel at Hitchin. Her own narrative is given at considerable length in Philip's Life of Bunyan.

of the World; or the losing and taking again of the 'Town of Mansoul.'" It is an extended allegory, representing the ruin and recovery of man by the revolt and recapture of a fortified town. Compared with the Pilgrim's Progress, it may be said to display more originality in its conception, and at least equal skill in its execution; but the subject is less pleasing to the reader, and it wants the simplicity and intense interest which constitute the charm of the former work. Had Bunyan written nothing else, this would alone have immortalized his name; but as it is, "the dark and mysterious grandeur of the Holy War has been outshone by the lively and more refreshing glories of the Pilgrim, the popularity of which is a disadvantage to its junior, the world being unwilling to recognize an author long deceased, by more than one great work, when the favourite is of itself conspicuously original."—*Montgomery*.

Bunyan's discourse on "the Barren Fig-tree" appeared soon after his Holy War. Some passages from this work have been given in a former chapter. In 1683 he published his discourses on "the Greatness of the Soul," which were preached at Pinner's Hall, in London. Of these sermons Mr. Philip remarks,—"They well account for the *electrifying* effect of his

ministry. It is impossible to read them without exclaiming, 'Hell is open before him; and destruction without a covering!' I know of nothing so awful. He makes the reader *hear* 'the sighs of the lost soul.'"

In the following year he gave to the world the "Life and Death of Mr. Badman." In his preface to this work he thus speaks of its origin and design:—"As I was considering with myself what I had written concerning the progress of the Pilgrim from this world to glory, and how it hath been acceptable to many in this nation, it came into my mind to write of the life and death of the ungodly, and of their travel from this world to hell. . . . Here, therefore, courteous reader, I present thee with the Life and Death of Mr. Badman; yea, I do trace him in his life, from his childhood to his death, that thou mayest, as in a glass, behold with thine own eyes the steps that take hold of hell; and also discern, while thou art reading of Mr. Badman's death, whether thou thyself art treading in his path thereto."

This work is not, like the Pilgrim and the Holy War, an allegory; but a fictitious narrative, in the shape of a dialogue between Mr. Wiseman and Mr. Attentive. The author adopted the dialogue form, as being more easy to

himself, and more pleasant to the reader, than an unbroken narrative. But although the book be fictitious as the professed life of one individual, it is not so as respects the incidents it relates; being, in fact, a grouping together of circumstances that had come under the author's own observation. "To the best of my remembrance," he remarks, "all the things that I here discourse of—I mean as to matters of fact—have been acted upon the stage of the world even many times before mine eyes."

His object in writing this book, he tells us, was that he might do something to check the flood of iniquity which threatened to inundate the country. "It is the duty of those that can, to cry out against this deadly plague; yea, to lift up their voice as with a trumpet against it, that men may be awakened about it, fly from it, as from that which is the greatest of evils. Sin pulled angels out of heaven, pulls men down to hell, and overthroweth kingdoms. Who that sees an house on fire, will not give the alarm to them that dwell therein? Who that sees the land invaded, will not set the beacons on a flame? Who that sees the devils, as roaring lions, continually devouring souls, will not make an outcry? But above all, when we see sin, sinful sin, swallowing up a nation, sinking a

nation, and bringing its inhabitants to temporal, spiritual, and eternal ruin, shall we not cry out, 'They are drunk, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink;' they are intoxicated with the deadly poison of sin, which will, if its malignity be not by wholesome means allayed, bring soul and body, and estate and country, and all, to ruin and destruction.

"In and by this my outcry I shall deliver myself from the ruins of them that perish; for a man can do no more in this matter—I mean as man in my capacity—than to detect and condemn the wickedness, warn the evil-doer of the judgment, and fly therefrom myself. But O, that I might not only deliver myself! O that many would hear and turn at this cry, from sin, that they may be secured from death and judgment that attend it!"

Of the Life of Mr. Badman, Dr. Southey remarks, that if it is less read than some of Bunyan's more popular works, "it is because the subject is less agreeable, not that it has been treated with less ability."

We know not in what year Bunyan wrote his "Divine Emblems; or Temporal Things spiritualized." These, though specified in the title-page as being "fitted for boys and girls," are chiefly designed for "children of a larger

growth" than those who are usually thus designated. In the preface the author says,—

"We now have boys with beards, and girls that be
Huge as old women, wanting gravity.
Their antic tricks, fantastic modes and way,
Shew they like very boys and girls do play
With all the frantic fooleries of the age,
And that in open view, as on a stage :
Our bearded men do act like beardless boys ;
Our women please themselves with childish toys."

Preachers, he tells us, had failed to produce any effect on these grown-up children, because they addressed them as *men* and *women*, and thus missed the mark by shooting too high : he therefore aims to attract their attention to religious concerns by spiritualizing common things ; and as the wise man had before sent his readers to learn wisdom of the ant, so Bunyan here endeavours to draw instruction from the spider, the fly, the cuckoo, the snail, and the frog, and from events and circumstances familiar to those to whom his emblems were addressed. Some parts of the work display much of that wit and humour with which our author abounded.* The

* The only *practical* joke of Bunyan's I ever heard of, was played off upon one of his friends, who was a cooper. He saw, on passing his shop, some *tubs* piled one above another, and threw them down. "How now, master Bunyan," said the cooper, "what harm do the tubs

emblem of "The Cuckoo," where he speaks of those who can do

"Little but suck our eggs and sing 'Cuckoo,'"

is evidently aimed at those of the state clergy, who, though they failed to feed the people with knowledge, were by no means negligent in exacting their tithes.

As this work is much less known than some of Bunyan's other productions, we give one or two of its shorter articles as a specimen of its style and character.

UPON THE BEGGAR.

HE wants, he asks, he pleads his poverty,
 They within doors to him an alms deny;
 He doth repeat and aggravate his grief,
 But they repulse him, give him no relief.
 He begs; they say, Begone: he will not hear,
 He coughs and sighs, to show he still is there.
 They disregard him; he repeats his groans:
 They still say, Nay; and he himself bemoans.
 They call him vagrant, and more rugged grow;
 He cries the shriller, trumpets out his wo.
 At last, when they perceive he'll take no nay,
 An alms they give him without more delay.

COMPARISON.

This beggar doth resemble them that pray
 To God for mercy, and will take no nay;

to you?" "Friend," said Bunyan, "have you not heard that every tub should stand on its *own* bottom?"—*Philip.*

But wait, and count that all his hard gainsays
Are nothing else but fatherly delays.
Then imitate him, praying souls, and cry ;
There's nothing like to importunity.

OF THE BOY AND THE BUTTERFLY.

“BEHOLD how eager this our little boy
Is for this butterfly, as if all joy,
All profits, honours, yea, and lasting pleasures,
Were wrapt up in her, or the richest treasures
Found in her, would be bundled up together—
When all her all is lighter than a feather.

He halloos, runs, and cries out, Here, boys, here !
Nor doth he brambles or the nettles fear :
He stumbles at the mole-hills, up he gets,
And runs again, as if bereft of wits ;
And all his labour and this large outcry
Is only for a silly butterfly.

COMPARISON.

This little boy an emblem is of those
Whose hearts are wholly at the world's dispose.
The butterfly doth represent to me
The world's best things at best but fading be :
All are but painted nothings and false joys,
Like this poor butterfly to these our boys,
His running through the nettles, thorns, and briars,
To gratify his boyish fond desires ;
His tumbling over mole-hills to attain
His end, namely, his butterfly to gain,
Doth plainly shew what hazards some men run,
To get what will be lost as soon as won.

Men seem in choice, than children far more wise,
Because they run not after butterflies;
When yet, alas! for what are empty toys,
They follow children, like to beardless boys.

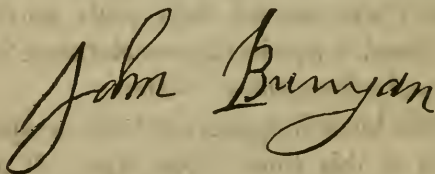
In 1684, Dr. Barlow, bishop of Lincoln, published a letter, calling on his clergy to enforce the laws against dissenters, in concurrence with another to the same effect, drawn up by the Bedfordshire justices. In consequence of this, "many were cited unto the spiritual courts, excommunicated, and ruined."—*Neal*.

To comfort and encourage the victims of this persecution, Bunyan wrote his "Advice to Sufferers," which was published the same year. He also "made it a part of his business to extend his charity to such as were taken and imprisoned, and gather relief for such of them as wanted. . . . Those whose spirits began to sink, he encouraged to suffer patiently for the sake of a good conscience, and for the love of God in Jesus Christ toward their souls, so that the people found a wonderful consolation in his discourse and admonitions."—*Doe*.

Bunyan himself appears to have escaped molestation at this time. Doe says, "It pleased God to preserve him out of the hands of his enemies, in the severe persecution at the latter end of the reign of Charles II., though they

often searched and laid wait for him, and sometimes narrowly missed him."

There is still extant an original deed, (of which Mr. Philip has given a fac-simile,) dated December 23d, 1685, by which Bunyan, "in consideration of the natural affection and love" he bore to his "well-beloved wife, Elizabeth Bunyan, as also for divers *other* good causes and considerations *now at this present especially moving*," transferred to her "all and singular his goods, chattels, debts, ready money, plate, Rings, household stuffe, Aparrel, utensills, Brass, pewter, Beding, and all other his substance whatsoever." The making of this singular deed can only be accounted for on the supposition that he feared he might again become the victim of intolerance, and wished in that case to save his family from want, by securing his little property for their use. The following is a fac-simile of his signature, as appended to this document.

A fac-simile of John Bunyan's signature, written in a cursive script. The name 'John Bunyan' is written in a fluid, connected hand. The 'J' is large and loops around the 'o'. The 'B' is also large and loops around the 'u'. The signature ends with a long, sweeping underline that extends under the word 'Bunyan'.

There is a tradition among the Baptists at Reading that he sometimes went through that town dressed like a carter, and with a long whip

in his hand, to avoid detection. Reading was a place where Bunyan was well known. The Baptist meeting house there was in a lane; and from a back door they had a bridge over a branch of the river Kennet, whereby, in case of alarm, they might escape.—*Southey*.

In 1687 James II. issued a declaration, annulling all laws against nonconformity to the Established Church. This he did, not out of any regard to religious liberty, (he being a bigoted Romanist,) but solely for the purpose of removing the restrictions against Popery, and to pave the way for its re-establishment as the national religion: that end accomplished, the only religious liberty allowed his subjects would have been the liberty to turn Papists. The design of the king in this act of toleration was covered with so thin a veil, that the dullest eyes could scarce avoid seeing through it. Bunyan perceiving the real object of the royal declaration, and anticipating a speedy termination of the indulgence which it granted, advised his brethren to use the liberty that was allowed them, while they might; and “to avail themselves of the sunshine by diligent endeavours to spread the gospel, and to prepare for an approaching storm by fasting and prayer.” The dreaded “storm” was, however, happily avert-

ed, by the abdication of James II., and the accession of William III., which took place in the following year.

For Popery and its abominations Bunyan entertained a righteous abhorrence, which was doubtless not a little increased by the study of his favourite Book of Martyrs. "He hated the scarlet lady most heartily, and hoped to see her funeral before his death. 'She is *now* dying,' he says; therefore 'let us ring her *passing-bell*. When she is dead, we who live to see it intend to *ring out*!' Had she died before him, not all his prejudices against bell-ringing, nor his old fears of the beam in Elstow church tower, would have prevented him from having another pull at the ropes."—*Philip*.

CHAPTER XVII.

LAST YEAR OF BUNYAN'S LIFE : HIS DYING
SAYINGS AND DEATH.

WE are now rapidly approaching the close of Bunyan's earthly pilgrimage, which terminated in 1688. In the early part of that year he published "The Jerusalem Sinner saved; or good news for the vilest of men: being an help to despairing souls; showing that Christ would have mercy, in the first place, offered to the biggest sinners." This is a discourse founded on that part of our Lord's commission to his apostles, in which he directs that their first publication of his gospel should be made in the Jewish capital:—"Begin at Jerusalem," Luke xxiv, 47. From these words he takes occasion to show, that the fact of the first offer of mercy being made to the sinners of Jerusalem, (who, having put to death the Lord of glory, he justly esteemed to be the worst of all sinners,) affords encouragement to the vilest offenders to repent and be saved.

This sermon appears to have been one of Bunyan's favourites, and the effect produced at various times by its delivery induced him to

enlarge it, and commit it to the press. "I have found, through God's grace," he says, "good success in preaching upon this subject, and perhaps so I may in writing upon it too. I have, as you see, let down this net for a draught; the Lord catch some great fishes by it, for the magnifying of his truth." The following are the heads of the discourse:—

Christ will have mercy offered in the first place to the biggest sinners:

1. Because the biggest sinners have most need thereof.

2. Because when any of them receive it, it redounds most to the fame of his name.

3. Because by their forgiveness and salvation, others hearing of it will be encouraged the more to come to him for life.

4. Because that is the way, if they receive it, most to weaken the kingdom of Satan. The biggest sinners are Satan's colonels and captains.

5. Because such, when converted, are usually the best helps in the church against temptation, and fittest for the support of the feeble-minded there.

6. Because they, when converted, are apt to love him most.

7. Because grace, when it is received by

such, finds matter to kindle upon more freely than it finds in other sinners. Great sinners are like the dry wood, or like great candles, which burn the best, and give the biggest light.

8. Because by that means the impenitent that are left behind will be at the judgment the more left without excuse.

“The Jerusalem Sinner” was followed in rapid succession by five other publications, the principal of which was, “Solomon’s Temple Spiritualized; or gospel light brought out of the temple at Jerusalem.” The author attempts to show that everything in and about the temple, its furniture, and its services—from the high priest and the holy place, down to the golden nails, the snuffers, and the spoons—were typical of something corresponding in the gospel dispensation. In writing this book Bunyan did but follow the fashion of the times, for this practice of spiritualizing was popular in those days, how little soever it may be esteemed now. In the seventy sections or chapters of which the work is composed, there is much good and instructive matter; but as a whole it exhibits far more of ingenuity than of sound judgment.

Bunyan’s labours were now nearly closed. His death appears to have taken place during one of his periodical visits to the metropolis.

His last sermon was preached in London, in July, 1688, from John i, 3, "*Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*" He concluded his discourse by exhorting those who were "born of God," to seek after holiness of life: "Consider that the holy God is your Father, and let this oblige you to live like the children of God, that you may look your Father in the face with comfort another day."

In the course of his ministry Bunyan had often found occasion to exercise himself in the character of a "peacemaker;" and we are told, that by his skill in reconciling difficulties, "he had hindered many mischiefs, and saved some families from ruin." It was in the performance of a work of mercy of this character that he contracted the disease which brought him to the grave. A young gentleman, a neighbour of Bunyan's, had fallen under the displeasure of his father, who in consequence threatened to disinherit him. The young man thinking Bunyan the likeliest person to effect a reconciliation, applied to him to act as mediator in his behalf. Prompted by his benevolent feelings, the good man, though labouring under bodily indisposition, readily undertook the task, and went to Reading for that purpose. There he

so successfully pleaded the young man's cause, that the father's heart was softened, and his bowels yearned over his son.

The difference being thus happily adjusted, he set out on horseback on his return to London, a distance of thirty-seven miles. The day proved very rainy, and he arrived wet and late at the house of his friend, Mr. Strudwick, a grocer on Snow Hill. His exposure brought on a severe cold, and though he was treated with all the kindness and consideration which loving friendship could suggest, he continued to grow worse and worse. At first he was seized with a kind of shaking, like an ague, which turning to a violent fever, he was compelled to take to his bed. Finding his strength decay, and his end draw nigh, he settled his temporal concerns as well as the shortness of the time and the violence of his disease would permit.

Having now done with the affairs of this world, he gave himself up to the thoughts of another, and expressed himself as wishing for nothing more than to "depart and be with Christ." He comforted those that wept around him, exhorting them to trust in God, and pray to him for mercy and forgiveness of their sins; telling them what a glorious exchange it would

be, to leave the troubles and cares of a wretched mortality to live with Christ for ever, with peace and joy inexpressible; expounding to them the comfortable scriptures by which they were to hope and assuredly come to a blessed resurrection in the last day. He desired some to pray, and joined with them in prayer. His last words, after he had struggled with a languishing disease, were: "Weep not for me, but for yourselves: I go to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will no doubt, through the mediation of his blessed Son, receive me, though a sinner, where I hope we ere long shall meet, to sing the new song, and remain everlastingly happy, world without end." He fell asleep in Jesus on the 12th of August, after an illness of ten days.*

Under the title of "Dying Sayings of Mr. Bunyan," a number of brief observations, ar-

* It appears, says Dr. Southey, that at the time of his death the lord mayor, Sir John Shorter, was one of his London flock. A memorandum, preserved in Ellis's Correspondence, (vol. ii, p. 161,) thus records his death. September 6, 1688: "Few days before died Bunyan, his lordship's teacher or chaplain; a man said to be gifted in that way, though once a cobbler." Mr. Philip further informs us, that an elegy on Bunyan's death was published under civic authority; and that a copy of it is now in the possession of John Wilks, Esq.

ranged under various heads, were published by Mr. Chandler, his successor at Bedford,* in 1692. These "sayings," Mr. Philip is of opinion, were noted by the Strudwick family during Bunyan's last sickness, and the few weeks of indisposition that preceded it. The following is a selection from them :—

"OF SIN. Sin is the great block and bar to our happiness ; the procurer of all miseries to man, both here and hereafter. Take away sin, and nothing can hurt us ; for death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, is the wages of it.

"No sin against God can be little, because it is against the great God of heaven and earth ; but if the sinner can find out a *little* God, it may be easy to find out little sins.

"Take heed of giving thyself liberty of committing one sin, for that will lead thee to another, till by ill custom it become natural.

"OF AFFLICTION. Nothing can render affliction so heavy as the load of sin ; would you therefore be fitted for afflictions, be sure to get

* Mr. Chandler, who was a Pedobaptist, was ordained to the pastoral charge of the Bedford congregation in 1691. He continued with them for the long space of fifty-six years, and died in a good old age in 1747. The present pastor is the Rev. Samuel Hillyard, also a Pedobaptist, who has been there more than forty years.

the burden of your *sins* laid aside, and then what afflictions soever you meet with will be very easy to you.

“The Lord useth his *flail* of tribulation, to separate the chaff from the wheat.

“In times of affliction we commonly meet with the sweetest experiences of the love of God.

“Did we heartily renounce the pleasures of this world, we should be very little troubled for our afflictions. That which renders an afflicted state so insupportable to many, is because they are too much addicted to the pleasures of this life, and so cannot endure that which makes a separation between them.

“The end of affliction is the discovery of sin; and of *that* to bring us to the Saviour; let us therefore, with the prodigal, return unto him, and we shall find ease and rest.

“I have often thought that the best of Christians are found in the worst times; and I have thought again, that one reason why we are not better is, because God purges us no more.

“OF DEATH AND JUDGMENT. Nothing will make us more earnest in working out the work of our salvation, than a frequent meditation of mortality: nothing hath a greater influence for the taking off our hearts from vanities, and for the begetting in us desires for holiness.

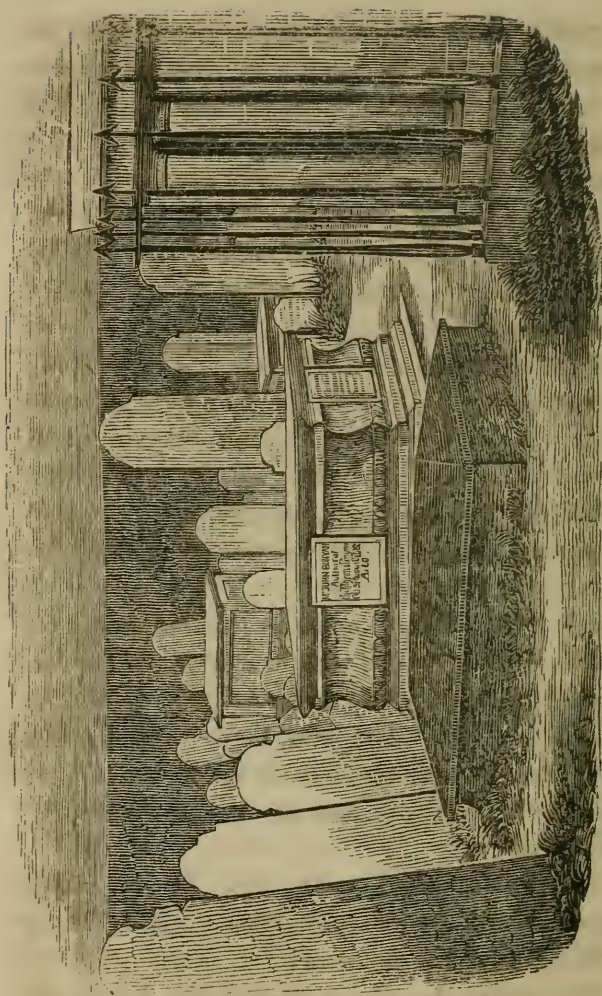
“When the sound of the trumpet shall be heard, which shall summon the dead to appear before the tribunal of God, the righteous shall hasten out of their graves with joy, to meet their Redeemer in the clouds ; others shall call to the mountains and hills to fall upon them, to cover them from the sight of their Judge : let us therefore in time be *posing* ourselves to know *which* of the two we shall be.

“OF THE JOYS OF HEAVEN. There is no good in this life but what is mingled with some evil. Honours perplex ; riches disquiet ; and pleasures ruin health. But in heaven we shall find blessings in their purity ; without any ingredient to imbitter, with everything to sweeten them.

“O ! who is able to conceive the inexpressible, inconceivable joys that are there ? None but those who have tasted of them. Lord, help us to put such a value upon them here, that in order to prepare ourselves for them, we may be willing to forego the loss of all those deluding pleasures here.

“How will the heavens echo for joy, when the bride, the Lamb’s wife, shall come to dwell with her husband for ever !

“Christ is the desire of nations, the joy of angels, the delight of the Father ; what solace



BUNYAN'S TOMB IN BUNHILL FIELDS.

then must the soul be filled with that hath the possession of him to eternity !

“If you would be better satisfied what the beatific vision means, my request is, that you would live holily, and go and see.”

Bunyan's remains were interred in the celebrated burying-place of the dissenters in Bunhill-fields, London. They were deposited in the vault of his friend, Mr. Strudwick ; and over them a tomb was erected to his memory, bearing the following inscription :—

MR. JOHN BUNYAN

AUTHOR OF THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

OB. 12 *Aug.* 1688, *ÆT.* 60.

‘The Pilgrim's Progress now is finished,
And death has laid him in his earthly bed.’

Elegy on the death of the Rev. J. B.

Bunhill-fields burying-ground was first used as a cemetery during the awful prevalence of the plague : after that period, a lease of it was taken by the leading metropolitan dissenters, for the interment of their friends ; and it has since become rich in the dust of eminent saints, whose ashes repose there till the morning of the resurrection. Mrs. Susanna Wesley, the mother, and Rev. Dr. Annesley, the maternal grandfather, of John and Charles Wesley, were buried there. Bunyan's tomb is said to be now

in a decayed condition, and the inscription nearly illegible ; in consequence of which measures have been taken to erect a new one in its place. "A committee has been formed to collect subscriptions for this purpose ; and small sums are solicited, that the greater number may enjoy the pleasure of contributing to perpetuating this memorial of departed genius and piety."*

"Brother in Christ ! thy flight we view,
Thy works, which trace thee to the skies ;
Fain would our spirits follow too,
And to thy height of glory rise.
O might the mantle of thy zeal,
Thy faith and prayer, on us descend !
Might we thy kindling ardour feel,
Our all in Jesu's cause to spend."

* London Baptist Magazine.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BUNYAN'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE: HIS FAMILY:
TRADITIONS AND RELICS: CONCLUSION.

BUNYAN'S person and character are thus described by his earliest biographer, who was personally acquainted with him:—"He appeared in countenance to be of a stern and rough temper,—but in his conversation mild and affable; not given to loquacity or much discourse in company, unless some urgent occasion required it; observing never to boast of himself or his parts, but rather to seem low in his own eyes, and submit himself to the judgment of others. . . . He had a sharp, quick eye, accompanied with an excellent discerning of persons, being of good judgment and quick wit. As for his person, he was tall of stature, strong boned, though not corpulent; somewhat of a ruddy face, with sparkling eyes; wearing his hair on his upper lip, after the old British fashion; his hair reddish, but in his latter days time had sprinkled it with gray; his nose well set, but not declining or bending, and his mouth moderately large; his forehead somewhat high; and his habit always plain and modest. And thus

have we impartially described the internal and external parts of a person whose death has been much regretted; who had tried the smiles and frowns of time, not puffed up in prosperity, nor shaken in adversity, always holding the golden mean.”*

Respecting his temporal circumstances, we are told by the same authority, that “though by the many losses he sustained by imprisonment and spoil, his chargeable sickness, &c., his earthly treasure swelled not to excess; he always had sufficient to live decently and creditably; and with that he had the greatest of all treasures, which is content; for as the wise man says, that is ‘a continual feast.’”

* In endeavouring to transmit to posterity an idea of the personal appearance of this extraordinary man, his earliest biographers are somewhat at variance with the painter of his portrait. The former represent his countenance to have been indicative of a stern and rough temper, though his nature in reality was mild and gentle. They misunderstood his physiognomy, which Sadler, the artist to whom he sat in 1685, three years before his death, read far more ably. He has, in fact, produced a portrait in which breathes forth the true character of the man: the capacious forehead, the full mild eye, the high nose, the large and well-formed mouth, the chin indicating firmness, and the placid expression of benevolence diffused over the whole countenance, are all in harmony with the mind of Bunyan as it appears in his works.—*St. John.*

A few short paragraphs will suffice to tell all that is known respecting the family and descendants of Bunyan. His wife Elizabeth, who pleaded his cause with so much spirit before the judges, did not long survive him; but in 1692 "followed her faithful Pilgrim to the celestial city, there to dwell in the presence of the King and her husband for ever."

He appears to have had six children. Mary, his "poor blind child," for whom he expressed such tender solicitude while in prison, died a few years before him. Thomas, his eldest son, who joined the church at Bedford in 1673, continued a member forty-five years. He occasionally preached in the neighbouring villages, and was sometimes appointed to visit disorderly members; he must therefore have been in good repute both for discretion and piety. Of the other children, John, Joseph,* Sarah, and Elizabeth, we believe nothing is known but their names. Katharine Bunyan, admitted a member

* In connection with this son there is an anecdote which strikingly exhibits the disinterestedness and simplicity of Bunyan's character. "I once told him," says one, "of a gentleman in London, a wealthy citizen, that would take his son Joseph apprentice without money, which might be a great means to advance him: but he replied to me, 'God did not send me to advance my family, but to preach the gospel.'"

of the church in 1692, and John Bunyan, received into communion the following year, are supposed to have been his grandchildren.

In the wall of the burial-ground attached to the Bedford meeting house is a tablet to the memory of Hannah Bunyan, a great grandchild of Bunyan's, who died in 1770, and with her all knowledge of his posterity terminates. It bears the following inscription:—"In memory of Hannah Bunyan, who departed this life February 15th, 1770, aged 76 years; she was great-granddaughter to the Rev. and justly-celebrated Mr. John Bunyan, who died at London, August 31st,* 1688, aged 60 years, and was buried in Bunhill-fields, where there is a stone erected to his memory. He was Minister of the Gospel here 32 years, and during that time suffered 12 years' imprisonment."

The cottage in which he was born is still substantially at Elstow, although somewhat modernized by recent repairs. Our view of it is copied from a picture taken from an old print.

Bunyan's meeting house at Bedford was pulled down, and a new one erected on its site in 1707. Howard, the philanthropist, and Mr.

* There would seem from this to be some uncertainty as to the day on which Bunyan died: the inscription on his own stone gives August 12th as the date of his death.

Whitbread, father of the distinguished member of parliament, both had pews in it.* The *old pulpit* was transferred to the new chapel, and used in it for many years, when it was purchased by Mr. Howard, who gave for it £30, and a new pulpit which cost him £40.† Mr. Whitbread, at the same time, gave £126 toward other improvements on the chapel; and at his death left to the church £500 in three per cent. stock, the interest of which was to be annually distributed in bread to the poor members,

* After his settlement at Cardington, Mr. Howard became a regular hearer at this chapel. He used, when the weather permitted, to walk from his residence to the chapel, a distance of three miles, every Sunday, before the morning service; and returned home in the same manner after the close of the afternoon service. In order to secure retirement for his devotions, he built a house within a few doors of the chapel, which he permitted a family to occupy free of rent, on the condition that he should have the use of the parlour when he was at Bedford on the sabbath,—*Life of Howard*.

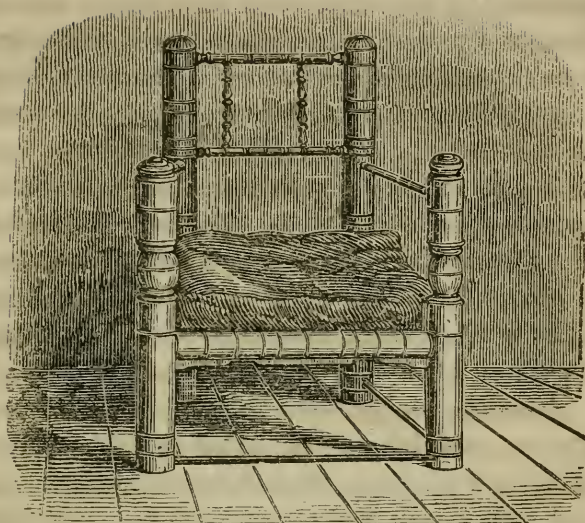
† What Howard did with it I know not. Mr. Hillyard has, however, a small table which was made from it, on which he places occasionally Bunyan's cup. That cup is a beautiful curiosity, and of exquisite workmanship. It seems, from the splendour of the colours, and the chasteness of both the form and ornaments, to be of foreign manufacture. It will hold about a pint; and tradition says, that Bunyan's broth was brought to chapel in it for his Sunday's dinner in the vestry.—*Philip*.

between Michaelmas and Christmas; assigning as a reason for his liberality, the respect he had for the memory of Bunyan.*

Bunyan's *pulpit Bible* is in the possession of the Whitbread family. "When it was to be sold among the library of the Rev. Samuel Palmer, of Hackney, Mr. Whitbread, the member, gave a commission to bid as much for it as the bidder thought his father, had he been living, would have given for a relic which he would have valued so highly. It was accordingly bought for twenty guineas, [\$100.]"—*Southey*.

Bunyan's copy of the *Book of Martyrs*, in three folio volumes, has recently, after a long absence, found its way back again to Bedford. For many years it has been eagerly sought after by collectors of curious and valuable books. It was in one family for nearly a century. In 1780 it was purchased by a Mr. Wontner, of London, from whom it descended to his daughter. After passing through two or three more hands, it was purchased by Mr. White, a bookseller of Bedford, and a great admirer of Bunyan, who gave for it £40, (\$192,) solely for the purpose of depositing it in the town where, in former days, it had been so highly appreciated by its venerated owner.

* His son afterward increased the principal to £980, and the interest now amounts to about \$140 a year.



One of the treasured relics of the Pilgrim, still preserved by the church, is his *vestry chair*, of which our cut is an accurate representation.

Bunyan's *walking-stick*—the Pilgrim's staff—is now, Mr. Philip tells us, in the possession of a Mr. Voley, by whom it is greatly prized.

The *jail* in which Bunyan was confined, (described as a loathsome building,) was pulled down many years ago. It stood on the bridge.

Among the spots consecrated by Bunyan's memory is a deep dell, or valley, in a wood near Hitchin, (a village in Hertfordshire,) in which a thousand people could assemble. Here,

standing by the stump of a tree, which served him for a pulpit, he frequently preached (sometimes at midnight) to large congregations, who stood around him on an eminence, in the form of a crescent. (It is said that during the service a person kept watch at the entrance to this spot, to give notice of the approach of officers or informers, so that the people might have time to escape.) A chimney-corner at a house in the same wood is still looked upon with veneration, as having been the place of his refreshment.

About five miles from Hitchin was a famous Puritan preaching place, called Bendish, where Bunyan was also in the habit of preaching. It had been a malt house, was very low, and had a thatched roof, and ran in two directions, a large square pulpit standing in the angle. Adjoining the pulpit was a high pew, on which ministers sat out of sight of informers, and from which, in case of alarm, they could escape into an adjacent lane. The building being much decayed, the meeting was transferred, in 1787, to a place called Coleman Green; and the pulpit, with a commendable feeling, was carefully removed thither. This, and the pulpit in London, (of which we have given an engraving,) are believed to be the only ones now in existence in which Bunyan is known to have preached.

At a house near Preston Castle, about three miles from Hitchin, the nonconformist ministers used to meet for mutual conference. At one of these meetings, at which Bunyan was present, that difficult text about the "groans" of the "creation" (Rom. viii, 19-22) was a subject of discussion : when it came to his turn to speak, he only said, "The Scriptures are wiser than I;" intimating that the subject was beyond his comprehension. Thus Luther used to say, "The meaning of that scripture I could never find out."

But the most valuable relics of Bunyan are his numerous writings, which constitute a monument to his genius that will prove far more enduring than the stone which marks the spot where his ashes repose. He was a much more voluminous author than most of his readers are aware. His works, great and small, were equal in number to the years of his life ; hence, to the title of one of his productions the publisher appended the words, "By John Bunyan, who wrote sixty books." He did not, however, live to publish the whole of them himself. After his death, his wife put forth an advertisement, stating her inability to print those which he had left in manuscript ; but they were included in a folio volume of his works, published in 1692, the year in which she died. It was edited by

Messrs. Chandler and Wilson,* who remark in the preface, "that several of his treatises had appeared in print before; the rest were prepared for the press by the author before his death." 'This volume, however, was far from containing the whole of his works.

Mr. Charles Doe, in conjunction with another person, issued a circular or prospectus for the publication of the remaining works. It contained "Thirty Reasons why Christian people should promote, by subscription, the printing in folio the labours of Mr. John Bunyan, late Minister of the Gospel, and Pastor of the congregation at Bedford:" there was also a brief sketch of the author's life, and the chronological list of his works, entitled, "A Catalogue-Table of Mr. Bunyan's Books, and their succession in publishing; most according to his own reckoning." We give the list, with some corrections.

1. Some Gospel Truths opened 1656
2. A Vindication of the above 1657
3. Sighs from Hell; or Groans of a Damned Soul.
4. The Doctrine of the Law and Grace unfolded; in a Discourse touching the Law and Gospel.
5. Discourse on Prayer. 1663

* Wilson was formerly a member of Bunyan's church at Bedford, from whence he went out to take the pastoral charge of the Baptist congregation at Hitchin, which is commonly supposed to have been founded by Bunyan.

6. A Map of Salvation, &c.
7. One Thing is Needful; or Serious Meditations upon the Four Last Things—Death and Judgment, Heaven and Hell.
8. Ebal and Gerizzim; or the Blessing and the Curse.
9. Prison Meditations.
10. The Holy City; or the New Jerusalem, 8vo. 1665
11. The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment 1665
12. Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners.
13. Defence of the Doctrine of Justification by Jesus Christ; in reply to Bishop Fowler, 4to. . . . 1671
14. A Confession of my Faith; and a Reason of my Practice 1672
15. Difference in Judgment about Water-baptism no Bar to Communion 1673
16. Peaceable Principles and True 1674
17. A Discourse on Election and Reprobation.
18. Light for them that sit in Darkness. . . . 1675
19. Christian Behaviour; being the Fruits of True Christianity 1675
20. Instructions for the Ignorant, 8vo. 1675
21. Saved by Grace; or a Discourse on the Grace of God.
22. The Strait Gate, 8vo. 1676
23. The Pilgrim's Progress, First Part, 12mo. . 1677
24. Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ, 8vo. . 1678
25. A Treatise on the Fear of God 1679
26. The Holy War. 1682
27. The Barren Fig-tree; or the Doom and Downfall of the Fruitless Professor.
28. The Greatness of the Soul, and the Unspeakableness of its Loss 1683
29. A Case of Conscience of Prayer.

30. Advice to Sufferers 1684
31. The Pilgrim's Progress, Second Part . . . 1684
32. Life and Death of Mr. Badman 1684
33. A Holy Life the Beauty of Christianity . . 1684
34. Discourse upon the Pharisee and the Publican 1685
35. Caution to stir up to watch against Sin. . . 1685
36. Meditations on Seventy-four Things . . . 1685
37. Questions about the Nature and Perpetuity of the Seventh-day Sabbath; and Proof that the First Day of the Week is the Christian Sabbath 1685
38. The Jerusalem Sinner saved 1688
39. Work of Jesus Christ as an Advocate, 12mo. 1688
40. A Discourse of the Nature, Building, and Government of the House of God 1688
41. The Water of Life; a Discourse upon Revelation xxii, 1 , 1688
42. Solomon's Temple spiritualized 1688
43. The Acceptable Sacrifice; or the Excellence of a Broken Heart. 1688
44. His Last Sermon, preached July, 1688.
45. An Exposition of the ten first Chapters of Genesis, and Part of the eleventh 1692
46. Justification by Imputed Righteousness; or no Way to Heaven but by Jesus Christ 1692
47. Paul's Departure and Crown; or an Exposition upon 2 Tim. iv, 6-8 1692
48. Of the Trinity and a Christian 1692
49. Of the Law and a Christian 1692
50. Israel's Hope encouraged; or what Hope is, and how distinguished from Faith 1692
51. The Desire of the Righteous granted; or a Discourse of the Righteous Man's Desires. 1692
52. The Unsearchable Riches of Christ . . . 1692

- 53. Christ a Complete Saviour; or the Intercession of Christ, and who are privileged in it 1692
- 54. The Saints' Knowledge of Christ's Love . . 1692
- 55. Discourse of the House of the Forest of Lebanon 1692
- 56. Of Antichrist and his Ruin; and of the Slaying of the Witnesses. 1692
- 57. A Christian Dialogue.
- 58. The Heavenly Footman; or a description of the Man that gets to Heaven.
- 59. A Pocket Concordance.
- 60. An Account of his Imprisonment.

This list is not quite complete, the Divine Emblems, and one or two other works, being omitted: we have not inserted them, not knowing the order of their publication. Numbers *seven, eight, nine, and thirty-five* in the foregoing list are in verse. Those numbered from *forty-four to sixty*, inclusive, were posthumous publications, most of which, as will be seen by the dates appended to them, appeared for the first time in the folio volume published in 1692. A work entitled, *Heart's Ease in Heart's Troubles*, which has been often printed under Bunyan's name, was not written by him.

Doe, who calls himself "the struggler for the preservation of Mr. Bunyan's labours in folio," appears not to have succeeded in his project.

In Granger's Biographical History of England, it is stated that "the works of Mr. Bun-

yan, which had long been printed on tobacco paper by Nicholas Boddington and others,* were in 1735-6 reprinted in two decent volumes, folio." This edition was prepared by the Rev. Samuel Wilson, a Baptist preacher in London, and grandson of the Wilson who edited the first folio volume. A finer edition was afterward published, with a recommendatory preface by Whitefield; and since that there has been another complete edition in six volumes, octavo.

No complete edition of Bunyan's writings has ever been printed in this country; the volumes published here as "Bunyan's Works" being only a selection.

The life of Bunyan furnishes a striking example of the elevating tendency of true religion, and its power over the mental as well as the moral faculties of man. No man could more emphatically say, *By the grace of God I am what I am*. No sooner was the ungodly sinner reclaimed, "than, just in proportion as his heart was purified, and his affections were raised from earthly, sensual delights, his understanding was opened, and the hidden energies of a

* Mr. Philip, speaking of the paper on which Bunyan's works were first printed, says that it seemed to be the very worst which the publishers could obtain.

mind, destined in future ages to rule over millions of minds, were awakened. . . . Now, had he continued in his headlong, heedless career of vice and folly, he must have lived a pest to civilized society, and ‘died as a dog dieth;’ his memory had perished with the recollections of his immediate descendants, and at this day it would have been no more known that such a man existed than what shape the cloud wore from which the first shower fell upon his head.”—*Montgomery*.

Having been brought out of the darkness of sin into the marvellous light of the gospel, he conscientiously devoted his newly-awakened energies to the cause of his divine Master. It became his meat and his drink to do and suffer what he believed to be the will of his heavenly Father. He *set* himself to serve the Lord; and with an earnestness of soul, and a singleness of purpose, of which there are too few examples, laboured that others might become partakers of that grace to which he felt himself so great a debtor. And in this work he was, as we have seen, eminently successful. Perhaps, with the single exception of Richard Baxter, there was no other man of his day whose labours and writings have been rendered so mightily instrumental in the furtherance of that gospel

for which he was so long "an ambassador in bonds."

The life and ministry of such a man are a standing rebuke to the arrogant pretensions of a class of individuals who, without any evidence of extraordinary piety or success, (but rather the contrary,) claim to be the exclusive ministers of Christ; but many of whom, if we may judge by their spirit and principles, had they lived eighteen hundred years ago, would have been found, not among the number of "the twelve," but in the ranks of those who rebuked the Saviour because he walked not "according to the TRADITION of the elders." While an ungodly and intolerant priesthood were making an empty boast of "apostolic succession," and forbidding to preach all who followed not them, John Bunyan was zealously doing "the work of an evangelist." And he made "full proof of his ministry." He could point those who questioned his authority to scores and hundreds brought to a knowledge of the truth through his instrumentality, and say, "*The seals of mine apostleship are they in the Lord.*" Whether of these twain, then, think ye, did the will of Him whom they both professed to serve? The Master himself has furnished a clew for the answer of this inquiry: "By their *fruits* ye shall know them."

Happy is the church "that hath its quiver full" of such preachers as John Bunyan; men of "clean hands and pure hearts," called and qualified by the Holy Ghost for "the work of the ministry," and thrust out into the vineyard by the "Lord of the vineyard." These, though no mitred prelate may have laid holy or unholy hands upon their heads, are the true successors of the apostles; and the blessed results that accompany their ministrations are a verification of the promise made by the great Head of the church to the first preachers of his gospel, and through them to their successors in all ages, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

We cannot better conclude our work than by appending the following lines, written by Bernard Barton on seeing an authentic portrait of Bunyan:—

And this is BUNYAN! How unlike the dull,
Unmeaning visage which was wont to stand
His PILGRIM'S frontispiece—its pond'rous skull
Propp'd gracelessly on an enormous hand;—
A countenance one vainly might have scann'd
For one bright ray of genius or of sense;
Much less the mental power of him who plann'd
This fabric quaint of rare intelligence,
And having rear'd its pile, became immortal thence.

But here we trace, indellibly defined,
All his admirers' fondest hopes could crave,
Shrewdness of intellect, and strength of mind ;
Devout, yet lively, and acute though grave ;
Worthy of him whose rare invention gave
To serious truth the charm of fiction's dress,
Yet in that fiction sought the soul to save
From earth and sin, for heaven and happiness,
And by his fancied dreams men's waking hours to bless.

Delightful author ! while I look upon
The striking portraiture of thee—I seem
As if my thoughts on pilgrimage were gone
Down the far vista of thy pleasant dream,
Whose varied scenes with vivid wonders teem—
SLOUGH OF DESPOND ! thy terrors strike mine eye ;
Over the WICKET GATE I see the gleam
Of shining light ; and catch that mountain high,
Of DIFFICULT ascent, the Pilgrim's faith to try.

The HOUSE called BEAUTIFUL ; the lowly VALE
Of SELF-HUMILIATION, where the might
Of CHRISTIAN, panoplied in heavenly mail,
Overcame APOLLYON in that fearful fight ;
The Valley named of DEATH, by shades of night
Encompass'd, and with horrid phantoms rife ;
The TOWN of Vanity, where bigot Spite,
Ever with Christian pilgrimage at strife,
The martyr'd Faithful gave the crown of endless life !

Thence on with Christian and his hopeful peer,
To Doubting Castle's dungeons I descend ;
The KEY of Promise opes those vaults of fear ;

And now o'er Hills Delectable I wend
To Beulah's sunny plains, where sweetly blend
Of flowers, and fruits, and song, a blissful maze ;
Till at the bridgeless stream my course I end,
Eyeing the further shore with rapture's gaze,
Where that bright city basks in glory's sunless blaze !

Immortal dreamer ! while thy magic page
To such celestial visions can give birth,
Well may this portraiture our love engage,
Which gives, with grace congenial to thy worth,
The form thy living features wore on earth :
For few may boast a juster, prouder claim
Than thine: whose labours blending harmless mirth
With sagest counsel's higher, holier aim,
Have from the wise and good won honourable fame.

And still, for marvelling childhood, blooming youth,
Ripe manhood, silver-tress'd and serious age—
Ingenious fancy, and instructive truth
Richly adorn thy allegoric page,
Pointing the warfare Christians yet must wage,
Who wish to journey on that heavenly road ;
And tracing clearly each successive stage
Of the rough path thy holy travellers trod,
The PILGRIM'S PROGRESS marks to glory and to God !

We have now given what we believe to be
a true portraiture of this distinguished man, and
a faithful narrative of the circumstances which
marked his life, so far as they are known or

can now be ascertained. Our task has not been accomplished without much labour ; still it has been a “labour of love,” and we hope also of spiritual profit. Indeed, no one who “goes on pilgrimage” can study Bunyan’s experience and not be benefited by it : and we trust that thou, gentle reader, hast found something in this life of the PILGRIM to aid thee in thy PROGRESS to the celestial city : if so, we have not written, nor hast thou read, in vain. Farewell.

APPENDIX.

NOTE TO PAGE 33.

ELSTOW (originally Helenstowe) is a place of very ancient date. It was noted as the site of an abbey of Benedictine nuns, founded in the time of William the Conqueror, by his niece.

The Church of St. Mary, at Helenstowe, was dedicated to the holy Trinity, and St. Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, from whom the village appears to have taken name, for Dugdale calls it "Helenstow, i. e., Helene statio." The tower (see the engraving on page 6) is entirely detached from the church. The belfry is furnished with a ring of five bells, bearing severally these inscriptions :—

God save our King. 1631.

Praise the Lord. 1602.

Christopher Graie made me. 1655.

VBCDEFG ABCDE RSTVW

Be yt knowne to all that doth me see

That Newcombe of Leicester made mee. 1604.

In 1821, Elstow contained 102 houses, and 548 inhabitants. *Gent. Mag.*, vol. xcvi, pt. 2, pp. 105-7.

NOTE TO PAGE 207.

This council was held by Pope John about the year 1400. The following account of the incident referred to is taken from a copy of the

Book of Martyrs, of the same edition as the one owned by Bunyan :—

“ As mention is made of a certaine councell before holden at Rome against the articles and bookes of John Wickliffe, it shall not be impertinent nor out of purpose to repeat a certain merry history, and worthy otherwise to be noted, written by Nicholas Clemangis, of a certaine spirit which ruled the Popish counceles; his words are these:—‘The same pope called a councell at Rome, at the earnest sute of diverse men. And a masse of the holy Ghost being said at the entrance into the said councell, (according to the accustomed manner,) the councell being set, and the said John sitting highest in a chaire prepared for him for that purpose: Behold, an ugly and dreadfull Owle, or as the common proverbe is, the evill signe of some mischance of death to follow, comming out of the backe halfe of him, flew to and fro, with her evill favoured voice, and standing upon the middle beame of the Church, cast her staring eyes upon the Pope sitting. The whole company began to marvell, to see the night Crow, which is wont to abide no light, how he should in the mid day come in the face of such a multitude, and iudged (not without cause) that it was an ilfavoured token. And as they stood beholding one another, and advising the pope, scarcely could they keepe their countenance from laughter. John himselfe, upon whom the

Owle stedfastly looked, blushing at the matter, began to sweat and to fret and fume with himselfe, and not finding by what other means he might salve the matter, being so confused, dissolving the councell, rose up and departed. After that there followed another Session: in the which the Owle againe, after the manner aforesaid, although, as I believe, not called, was present, looking stedfastly upon the Bishop; whom hee beholding to bee come againe, was more ashamed than hee was before (and iustly;) saying, hee could no longer abide the sight of her, and commanded that shee should bee driven away with battes and shoutings: but she being afraid neither with their noise, neither with anything else, would not away, untill that with the strokes of the stickes, which were throwne at her, shee fell downe dead before them all.”

NOTE TO PAGE 276.

We give below, brief notices of some of the works referred to, compiled from Southey, Philip, Montgomery, and others.

Le Romant des trois Pelerinages. The Romance of the Three Pilgrimages, by William de Guilleville, a priest of the Abbaye Royale of St. Bernard at Changles.

This comprises three works,—The Pilgrimage of Human Life—The Pilgrimage of the Soul—and the Pilgrimage of Jesus Christ. The first was composed in 1310; the last bears the date 1358. They are composed in octosyllabaic French verse, and were very popular in the

fourteenth century. The second part only was rendered into English. It was translated in 1413, and a manuscript of it is still preserved; it is entitled

Y^e Dreame of y^e Pilgrimage of y^e Soule, translated out of Frensch into Englisch, w^h som addicion, y^e yer of our Lord M. iiii and Prittene.

Caxton *printed* the "Pilgrimage of the Soul" in 1483. It details the numerous singular incidents which are presumed to befall the soul in its progress after separation from the body; namely, its trial before St. Michael the Provost, and final sentence to purgatory; a description of the pains of hell, and its inhabitants; the soul's release from purgatory, and ascension to heaven, etc.

The Voyage of the Wandering Knight, showing the whole course of a man's life, how apt he is to follow vanitie, and how hard it is for him to attaine to virtue. Devised by John Carthemy, a Frenchman, and translated out of French into English by W. G., of Southampton.

This is the title of an old quarto volume, printed in black letter, without date. It is the first work in which can be traced any resemblance to the Pilgrim's Progress. There were two editions of this moral romance printed in the sixteenth century, and a third in the seventeenth; it is said also that the latter was popular in Bunyan's day. There is, however, little similarity between the two works, beyond the circumstance, that each consists of imaginary travels, in quest of "*true felicitie*."

The Pilgrimage of Perfection, written by William Bond, a brother of Sion Monastery. Printed by Wynkyn de Worde. 1526.

This is a devotional treatise, divided into three parts, of which the first shows that the Christian life is a pilgrimage; the second, that it leaves the world; and the

third contains the self-pilgrim, in a seven days' journey assigned to the seven days of the week, the first five containing the active life of religion, and the last two the contemplative life. The whole work is a collection of monastical literature and devotions, comprising expositions of the Pater-noster, Creed, Ave, Decalogue, etc.

The Pilgrimage to Paradise ; compiled for the direction, comfort, and resolution of God's poore distressed children in passing through this irksome wilderness, etc. By L. Wright. 4to. 1591.

The Pilgrim's Journey towards Heaven. By William Webster. *Lond.* 1613. 8vo.

The Pilgrimage of Dovekin and Willekin to their Beloved in Jerusalem, with a Narrative of their adversities and the end of their adventures ; described and set forth in emblematical pictures by Boetius of Bolswaert.

This is a translation of the title of a work in Dutch, published in 1627, and afterward translated into French. A few years ago some ignoramus saw a copy of the work, and from a fancied resemblance in some of the cuts, took it to be the original of the Pilgrim's Progress ; and through the newspapers straightway enlightened the world with the discovery that Bunyan was not the author but merely the *translator* of his Pilgrim ; and this in face of the facts that the figures represented in the cuts of the Dutch book were all females, and that Bunyan did not understand a word of any language than his own. Dr. Southey gives an abstract of this work, (which was never translated into English,) showing that it has no resemblance to Bunyan's.

The Pilgrim's Passe to the New Jerusalem : or the serious Christian his enquiries after heaven. 12mo. *Lond.* 1659.

A collection of seven meditations on different pas-

sages of Scripture; the first of which is called "Abraham's profession and the pilgrim's condition: or the enquiring sojourner directed: a meditation on Gen. xxiii, 4."

The Pilgrim's Guide from his Cradle to his Death-bed, with his glorious Passage from thence to the New Jerusalem, represented to the Life in a delightful new Allegory, wherein the Christian Traveller is more fully and plainly directed, than yet ever he hath been by any, in the right and nearest Way to the celestial Paradise. By John Dunton, Rector of Aston-Clinton.

This work appeared a few years before the Pilgrim's Progress. It was published by the author's son, the eccentric John Dunton, a well-known bookseller of that day. It was for a time very popular, and went through several impressions in a few months. In one of his catalogues, (1685,) Dunton advertises the tenth edition of Bunyan's Pilgrim, (the First Part,) price one shilling.

Bishop Patrick's once popular work, "The Parable of the Pilgrim," was written about the same time as Bunyan's, and appeared in 1672. Neither author therefore could have borrowed anything from the other, as both books were written before either was published. Independently of this, the two works are exceedingly diverse both in matter and spirit.

THE END.

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